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L O R D N I A L ,

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R O M A N C E ,

IN FOUR CANTOS.



THE WIZZARD'S GRAVE,

THE

ORIGIN OF BACCHUS, ETC.

BY J. M. MOORE

"On Lough Neagh's banks as the fisherman strays,
When the clear calm eve 's declining ;
He sees the round towers of other days
In the waves beneath him shining."

MOORE.

NEW YORK :

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TO DANIEL O'CONNELL, Esq.

MY DEAR SIR :

As one to whom the welfare of Ireland is dearer than any thing else, either in this world or out of it, I feel it my duty to inscribe to you this little volume as a slight, but sincere, testimony of my gratitude for your glorious and unbending efforts to alleviate the sufferings of that most unhappy country. I will make no apology for essaying to save my name, from a, perhaps, merited oblivion, by the introduction of yours ; for, though the result of my effort should be deemed unworthy, the motive that led to it was pure, and as such I feel it cannot be altogether unacceptable. I have scarcely a hope that you will ever notice this volume — less, that you will waste any of your invaluable time in the perusal of it, and yet I would fain seduce you to the task : — I would tell you that the plot of the chief story is laid among the most sublime and beautiful portions of your own beautiful county — that the subject is FREEDOM, and, above all, that it is the production of one to whom even his very doubtful chance of fame is dearer than life and fortune, and yet who would cheerfully relinquish all claim to it — if, by so doing, he could in any way advance the prosperity of your beloved Erin.

Believe me, Dear Sir, to be your's most
devotedly for ever,

THE AUTHOR.

New York, March, 1834.



PREFACE.

I WILL not trouble the reader with my reasons for publishing this volume, and yet there are some even more binding than those of profit or ambition. Neither will I detain him with long arguments, eulogising its merits, or apologising for its defects — the one (if he takes pains) he will be enabled to discover of himself — the critics will save him the trouble of looking for the other; and so, without further comment, I shall make my obeisance in the words of Byron, and commit myself to the storm:

Gentle reader, and
Still gentler purchaser, the bard — that's I,
With due permission, shakes you by the hand,
And so your humble servant, and good bye;
We 'll meet again if we should understand
Each other, and if not, I shall not try
Your patience further than by this short sample;
'T were well if others followed my example.



LORD NIAL.

It was at the close of a pleasant day, in the latter end of April, in the year 18—, that a traveller, who seemed weary of his way, entered a little village within a short distance of the lakes of Killarney, in the south of Ireland. He approached, and left behind him, though with some hesitation, the village inn; for his eye had caught, and evidently lingered, on the “Dry lodging and good entertainment for man and beast,” that seemed to bow to him from the swinging sign-board as he passed. However, the impression was not lost, for our traveller had hardly proceeded a hundred paces further, when the sky suddenly lowered, and a heavy shower so decided his wavering opinions in favor of good entertainment, that he returned by the run.

McDermott was such a man as you would pause to look at—young, handsome, and by his eye an enthusiast; but his faded cheek, and veteran garb, denoted him to be on rather so-so terms with the world. Were there a few more furrows on his brow, he might have been a superannuated

curate: as it was, he was most likely a poet, worn to the stump like an old goose-quill on his first epic, and now just set out in quest of a patron—we say *just*, because there was an occasional dash of hope in his glance, which told, plainly enough (if such was the case), that at all events he had not been very long on the road.

Mine host of the village inn was something of an oddity; for lacking all anticipation of profit, he welcomed his guest with a warm heart and an open hand; he had seen him linger in the first instance, and it struck him at the time that his only reason for not sojourning then was, that he had not the wherewithal to purchase a welcome. "He is wrong," thought the publican; and had such been the case, the publican would have been perfectly right; for there was a virtue in the seedy coat, and hollow cheek, of the stranger, that gave him a more decided and acknowledged claim to the hospitality of Tom Murphy, than if he had worn the costume of a prince. However, as was subsequently discovered, it was neither the poverty of his heart or pocket that obliged the traveller to take the road under the damning influence of a shabby coat.

* * * * *

Supper being over, Mrs. Murphy mixed a jug of punch for her husband and his guest, and sat down on a boss by the fire-side, to hear, and, if occasion occurred, take part in the conversation.

The rain had turned out to be more than an "April shower;" for it still made an audible clattering on the roof, and the low sugh that was just beginning to whistle round the house, gave certain indication of the coming storm.

"It is an awful night," observed Murphy, "and if it continues till twelve o'clock, there will be close fists and sour faces among the farmers by the morrow."

"As how?"

"It is only a foolish tale, sir, but we poor folks about the water here can't help believing it for all that, it so often turns out to be true. Some people, indeed, use very wise, and seemingly incontrovertible, arguments about chance, and so forth; but it often struck me as very singular, that, so far as regards the meeting of April and May in tears, or sunshine, as they call it, Chance always behaves herself as if she went by clock work. You have no doubt heard of a mighty prince that formerly lived in these parts, named O'Donohoe."

The stranger assented.

"Then of course the story is old with you; so I will merely subject you to the fag end in explanation of the close fists and sour faces. After many years spent in promoting the glory and happiness of his people, he one day like the present (the last of April), sent an invitation to his friends and vassals to meet him at his castle on

the following morning. At the hour appointed, he rode into the court-yard where they were assembled, mounted on his favorite white charger, and to the indescribable astonishment and grief of all, informed them that he was about to take a last leave of his beloved subjects for ever. After a most affectionate farewell, he proceeded slowly, and with an air of mysterious grandeur, towards the lower lake, and in the sight of thousands who followed to witness the result, rode over the water, nor did his horse's hoofs appear to make any more impression on the surface of the deep, than if it had been a plain of marble. Arrived in the centre, he reined his steed and bowed three times to the admiring spectators, when the water at his command opened beneath and received him into its bosom for ever. His subjects mourned him rather as one that was absent than dead; for he was often seen early in the mornings of summer, astride of his white steed, riding over the lakes, followed by ten thousand beings all as bright as angels. In time, however, as sin crept more into the world, his visits became less frequent, and for many years he has never honored Lough Desmond with his presence, save when he comes to celebrate the anniversary of the day that he retired from our world, and as the harbinger of a sunny summer and plentiful harvest; for there is an old tradition that whenever May sets in clouded by an April storm, he fails to make his appearance

and so, of course leaves the unfortunate farmers to the dismal anticipation of blighted crops and light profits."

"Do you believe the story?" inquired the stranger, in a trembling tone, and bending forward to hear the reply.

"Faith!" answered mine host, "I can hardly tell; for I sometimes find it difficult enough to separate that which I believe in sooth, from that which I merely believe for the sake of fashion."

McDermott started at the reply. "What!" said he, bending his dark eyes on those of the publican, "do you think it possible for a man to force himself into the belief of any thing, against the warranty of his own judgment?"

"Thus far I do; man is ever loath to divest himself of the opinions adopted and cherished when a child; as an instance—often have I sat trembling, though with sensations far less allied to terror than delight, while my mother and her host of gossips, seated round a blazing fire of a winter's evening, gave their various accounts of the last May-day procession on the lakes. Then would some of them describe the very texture of the garments of the water-king and his attendants, on of course 'indisputable authority,' nor was even the motto of 'ERIN-GO-BRAGH,' on their banners, forgotten. Then a child, I believed them; and so is the memory of those dear hours interwoven with my present ideas of things, that I

would fain believe them still — nay, scarce dare do otherwise, although some books which I have read on the subject, and my own better judgment in an unprejudiced hour, tell me that such things are not in accordance with the system of nature.”

“And wherefore not !” exclaimed the traveller, leaping to his feet, in the very agony of enthusiasm. “What is there in the system of nature, as you call it (which would be more religiously expressed, the system of God), that renders the existence of such beings even improbable? Is it not the opinion of the most enlightened among men that there are certain invisible agents among us, who direct our actions, or even influence our motives? and is it not a most happy and holy opinion; for he who can believe in the existence of a spirit, can never cease to believe in the existence of his God. You will allow that there is not a wasted particle in the creation; then think you that the ponderous ball on which we stand is an unprofitable mass, from the surface to the centre? O no, no! The Omnipotent has formed abodes in the more beautiful and hidden recesses of earth, where men of eminent virtue are still permitted to reside, even undivested of their mortal appendages. Reason sanctions the belief.—Is it to be supposed that the frames of men whose lives have been devoted to the service of their fellows, shall mingle in corruption with the murderer and the traitor? Shall the heart that delighted in vir-

tue be rendered incapable of it, and forced to share in the oblivion of time with that which revelled in impiety? I at least know to the reverse. — Listen and believe:

“ I was a short time since engaged in writing a poem, commemorative of the achievements of a patriot chief, who, it was supposed, had long since fallen a martyr to the cause of freedom. One night, while dreaming of my hero, my chamber was illuminated by a glow of the most resplendent light, and a figure stood before me, the counterpart of one that had often previously been conjured up by my own imagination. His countenance was of an unearthly beauty — the image of an eternal youth that time has no effect on, and his bearing such as would have graced an embodied representative of the god of War. For a time the noble vision (or what seemed a vision) gazed on me in silence, and then with a voice of majesty, yet soft and exquisite as the music of an angel’s lute, addressed me thus: ‘McDermott, thou art engaged in writing the history of a being whose fate is a mystery to man — the history of one that was mourned as dead, but who still lives and before thee; more than this I am not permitted to reveal; but as the first sunbeams dance o’er the waves of Mucross on the next May morn, be thou upon its shore, and thou shalt be in possession of that which is now a secret to the world.’ At this moment I opened mine eyes, for the vision

had been seen with the eyes of my soul — it was gone — all was darkness around me, and not a vestige remained of what had so lately been there, save a most odoriferous perfume; yet there was nothing fragrant in the room, except a few wild and withered flowers which I had culled some days previous on the bank of a streamlet in the mountain. The morrow will be the first day of May, and to the very purpose of making trial as to the truth of the vision of my chamber came I hither — from whence it matters not — nor will it ever — the last that loved me is at rest, and the friendless are never missed. — Laugh not till you know the result — but you will not; your eye assures me that you have too much judgment to sneer at a thing, like some others, because it may chance to be out of the range of your conception. But it approaches midnight — farewell now — I must be waiting at my post.”

Here the enthusiast rose, and in spite of all remonstrance (for the storm had reached its zenith) took his leave, and sallied forth in the direction of the lake. Murphy, however, had insisted on lending him his frieze fearnought, and on extorting a promise for his return on the morrow.

The first of May was ushered in with all its attributes of beauty; every appearance of the storm was obliterated, and the villagers, as they

proceeded to their daily toil, were congratulating each other that the change had taken place immediately before the ominous hour of midnight. — The sun was now in the second quarter of the heavens, and mine host of the village inn was sitting on a bench at the door, enjoying his morning pipe, when he was apprized of some person approaching at a brisk pace, and in a moment after he had clasped the extended palm of his guest of the preceding night.

A person skilled in the mysteries of the human countenance might have read a wondrous tale in that of McDermott — bursting eye-balls, quivering lips, and a more than ashen palidness of brow, which, however, at times was instantly suffused (and but for an instant) with a headlong gush of the deepest crimson, forced upwards through some long forsaken channel, and making it but too evident how unsystematically his heart was discharging its functions.

“My friend!” he exclaimed, “I long to unbo-
som myself; and you (or I am misaken in your
eye) will have no objection to hear my tale.”

Murphy was all impatience — so was his wife, who now came bustling forward to welcome the stranger, and who, it seems, had risen an hour earlier than usual in consequence, as she expressed it, of not being able to go to sleep for dreaming “several times, indeed, during the night, she had heard music and seen lights in the room; and

more than once had found herself behind a great prince on a white horse, which, thank God, turned out to be only a dream after all ; for, grand as he was, she wouldn't have taken him in exchange for Tom Murphy ! !”

“ Then,” resumed the stranger, in a tone of mysterious vivacity, “ I will soon have proved to you beyond the possibility of a doubt, that your mother and her gossips were right, and also that Lord Nial, a patriot chief, who, it was supposed, had perished in those days when freedom ceased to wave her banner in Erin, is still living, enshrined in a goodlier frame of flesh and blood than either of us — nay, search me as you will, my friend, I am serious — by Heaven, I am serious ! and if a lie knowingly pollutes my lips during the recital of my adventure, may it be the last word that my tongue shall ever utter.

“ When I arrived at Mucross last night, though the storm had abated, still the troubled waters were boiling and roaring, as if a spirit was tossing them from their deepest springs. It was a noble sight ; the white crested waves flashing in the moonbeams, and combined with the heaven of beauty by which I was surrounded (for Mucross is all a heaven), it would have fully indemnified me for my few days of toil, was I even not blessed with a view of the wonders that followed. The hour had ceased to wear that cold, grey appearance which properly can be designated

neither night or day — poets, I think, call it the earlier dawn — and the eastern horizon had just begun to assume a more brilliant appearance than any other portion of the heavens, though the sun was still beneath the wave, as if seeking with its own resources to deck a throne meet to receive the monarch of luminaries, when, sudden as the sweep of a whirlwind, the waters all rushed as if from their centre, with a tremendous roar, against the surrounding banks, and then receding again with equal violence, became clear and unruffled as a mirror. Yes, I assure you, Murphy, they appeared as if robed in chrystal ice, being even free from that breezy tremble which agitates the living wave, though independent of the gentlest zephyr; and which is perchance the native stir of its own sensations.

“I said the sun was still invisible — but at this instant, and seemingly arrayed in more than usual splendor, he darted from the sea, and at the same time a white mist, which I could liken to nothing but a silver veil, rose gradually around the lake to about the attitude of a lofty sorbes. This enclosure encroached neither on land or water, being apparently thinner than the fleecy gauze of a wedding garment; but still, while impalpable as a shadow, it was impenetrable as a barrier of steel; for though nothing susceptible to the touch met my hand, yet all my efforts could not force it through.

“Heavens! could I believe mine ears — mine eyes? — at once the voices of a thousand lyres swelled through the firmament, while ten thousand forms, whose beauty more than realized my brightest dreams of the elect in glory, stood before me on the azure waters of that sleeping lake. — The men (for men they were — not the flimsy phantoms that our bards are wont to describe them — but youthful, noble, palpable, and athletic) were almost all warriors, equipped after the fashion of by-gone days, with helmet, plume, scarf, lance, and corslet; but such was the lustre of their armor, that it flung a halo around them sufficiently evident even amid the gathering glory of a cloudless sun. But who shall describe the dames — their dresses, and their beauty? I at all events profess my inability; for there stood not one amidst that host of seraphs whom it would have been idolatry to have worshipped. They assembled not as the multitude, but forming in pairs filed at regular intervals around the brink. And O! how different that pageant from a mortal procession! There lover mourned not for lover, --friend for friend — all were happy — all were mated! — *all*, said I? ah, no! there was one — one exception; and that — a maid.”

Here McDermott faltered, and he failed in his endeavors to suppress a sigh — there was evidently some connexion between his feelings at the moment and that solitary maid — however, a

moment's pause composed him, and he again continued :

“ It were tedious to describe their successive movements and evolutions — their various orders of knighthood — the different processions of their banners, and the devices of their shields ; although by the latter I could have named many a warrior in that multitude then all life and beauty, whose requiems had been sung more than a thousand years before.

“ A line of heralds, harpers, pages, &c. now advanced, denoting the vicinity of the prince. I heard the rustling of his chariot wheels on the water — two — four — eight, milk-white coursers passed me, when, seated on a throne, magnificent beyond the loftiest flight of human fancy — the vision of my chamber appeared. Yes, I could not be deceived ; I may forget the countenance of the father that begat me — the mother that bore me ; but the majestic sweetness of thine, immortal Nial, can never, never be effaced from my memory. Beside him sat a dame, the sublimity of whose charms claimed more than a poet's passing gaze — I knelt to her as she glided by ; and be the penalty as it may, the homage of my heart at that minute was little less than adoration. O ! that I could unbosom her beauties as they are interwoven with my inmost soul — eyes of such ethereal azure, that they shamed the very heavens of a May-day morn — chesnut tresses all unbraided

and rich in beauty as the golden streaks of an autumn sunset, floating in ten thousand luxuriant and native ringlets to her snowy shoulder, but leaving her high brow bare, from which my enamored vision shrunk abashed as if it felt it would have been too much of happiness to linger on any thing so miraculously fair.

“When this beautiful being and her lord had passed, I observed through the vista between them and the next two figures in succession, a minstrel detach himself from a group in the centre, and approach the spot where I stood. — His lyre was suspended from his shoulder, and in his right hand he held a book, of which, by the air of complacency with which he seemed to survey it, I presumed him to be the author. He had arrived within a pace of the brink, when the silvery mist for about a foot on either side rolled back like a scroll, leaving a space through which he presented the volume, with this brief sentence: “Nial redeems his pledge.” While reaching out my hand to receive it, I had bent mine eyes upon the ground, whether by an effort of mine own, or through the influence of some mightier power, I can scarcely tell; but on again raising them, with intent to see the giver, whom I had begun to thank — lo! he was gone — the bright pageant — the silver wall, were no more; the waters had aroused them from their mystic slumbers; and now ten thousand of those

white-crested gigantic waves, which fishermen call the manes of O'Donohoe's horse, were dashing about, with even more than wonted fury, as if rejoicing at their escape from that mystic bondage.

"I have nothing more to add, save that Lord Nial bowed to me in token of recognition as he passed — save that — but no! I may not reveal it — however, the time will come, say this day twelvemonth, when all shall be explained.

"Here is the book," said McDermott, in conclusion of his wondrous tale, "with it rests the proof of all that I have told you."

Thus saying, he produced from his pocket a small black bound volume of Celtic poetry. "You see," said he, "it is in Irish; and my task is to translate it; better, to be sure, far better the labor of that bright-eyed minstrel of the water in its own native strength, than after being modelled to suit the whims and fancies of a more grovelling genius. It is even so, Murphy! the tame of spirit will ever denounce or clip down to their own level the outbreathings of the warmer soul; even on the same principle that rooks will mock at the flight of the eagle, either, because they have no sympathy with things more noble than themselves, or because they cannot accompany him on his way. — But what can I do? — have we not substituted the mixed jargon of fifty tongues for our own beautiful and poetic language? and so, if I give the Celtic version of my

poem, it cannot find readers even in Irishmen; for alas! the few who yet dare to speak the language of their country, are in general confined to those to whom poverty, or oppression, has denied the privilege of education.

* * * * *

McDermott took up his residence with mine host, and became the tenant of a little back chamber, from whence there was a partial view of the most beautiful lakes in the world. His habits were reserved, but not singular, save inasmuch as he was the gentlest and most charitable of the human race. Next to the accomplishment of his task, books were his idols; nor were those which engaged him most such as might nerve the excitement of a maniac — a well thumbed Bible occupied the most distinguished situation of his library. But still his malady continued unabated, still would he discourse of the pageant on the waters — describe the beauty of his chieftain's bride — dwell on the magnificence of her chariot — on the excellence of the music — the noble bearing of the warriors, and so forth; but whenever he spoke of the single solitary maid, there was that in his voice and eye, which told plainly that he thought more of her than of all the rest together.

Murphy had often watched him while engaged in his labors, and at times he fancied he could trace a similitude between the English and the

Celtic manuscript ; however, he might have been mistaken — he could not swear — nor did he ever dare to hint it to his guest, whom, whatever his wife might urge to the contrary, he now firmly believed to be under the influence of some strange delusion.

We observed before that he was not so destitute of the good things of this life as would seem from his appearance ; the arrival of much expensive baggage a few days after himself, was the best warranty of this ; but he lavished his wealth with an unsparing hand — as one, indeed, who did not intend to be long a sojourner in a world where without it man is nothing.

It was on the anniversary of the day that he first came to the village when, with a smiling brow, he entered the breakfast parlor, holding a book in his hand.

"Here," said he to Murphy, "is the fruit of my twelve months' labor, and after all I fear it is little better than a parody on the original. — However, I have done my best ; Ossian could have done no more ; and it is to you I now bequeath it, to make it public when you list ; for I must be away tomorrow."

"Tomorrow?"

"Even so, I must anticipate the sun."

"But to return?"

"The ways of Providence are inscrutable ; I may — hereafter I may ; but not to claim a

home. As I will have but little need of baggage on the way, the trifles that were mine are yours. Be careful of the Bible, for the sake of an absent friend — it was my mother's.

Before Murphy could answer him, he was gone — gone to leave his last donation with a few poor people in the neighborhood, who, for the last twelve months, had chiefly subsisted on his bounty.

For some time the publican and his wife sat gazing at each other in stupid amazement. McDermott had entwined himself around their hearts; they loved him, dearly loved him: so no wonder that the idea of losing him, and so soon, was too much for their philosophy: besides, until this moment, he had never mentioned a word about his intended departure.

"Tomorrow will explain," thought Murphy, now recurring to the mysterious expression of his friend twelve months before. "If he took his own, there might be some secret reason for his removal; but why leave them his property? why needlessly throw himself on the world unprovided? Good God! could he be meditating suicide!"

"There is something bad in it, at any rate," sobbed the afflicted landlady, crossing herself at that awful exclamation, "it is not for nothing the cat broke the looking-glass last week, and has n't the death-watch been ticking all about the house

ever since the night that Molly Rooney, the lucky woman, saw poor Mack's fetch, with a short candle in its hand, jumping into the pool of water."

* * * * *

The day wore dismally to its close. Murphy used all the arguments he could devise to induce his friend to stay, but in vain; his only answer was a hopeless sigh, or a still more hopeless "impossible."

At length he was standing up to retire for the night, when the publican laid his hand on his shoulder and spoke as follows, his eye the while glistening with a tear, and his voice trembling with emotion:

"I know not by what power you have linked yourself so closely with our affections; was it by your money? No, our hearts acquit us of the thought. God knows our friendship—our love (for you are dear to us as one of our own children) is not mercenary. Oh! McDermott, my honored friend, if your generous hand and heart have been too open for your abilities, and that for such reason you are going to do — Heaven only knows what, — but I have fearful suspicions, banish, O banish the idea — remain with us, and be the partaker of a purse, which your generosity has left any thing but empty — Murphy were a greater scoundrel than ever disgraced his name, from its fonder downwards, if he would

not cheerfully, should your necessity require it, part with his last shilling in your service. Alas ! it is useless ; you will not ; — I read it in your eye, you will not stay. God grant that I may have no reasonable foundation for the idea, but much I fear that the destination of the journey you are about to undertake, is the grave." Here the poor fellow, overpowered by his feelings, sank backwards in his chair, and shading his face with both his hands, wept audibly. His wife and children followed his example, while McDermott, with a bosom swelling with sorrow, waving them a last good night — hurried from the room.

* * * * *

It was now past midnight, and Murphy and his wife were sitting over the expiring embers of a wood fire, into which they were poring for something that might elucidate their doubts (for certain appearances in fire are regarded as ominous by the superstitious of most countries), when they were startled by a shrill, piercing, and unearthly cry. Both ran to the door, for the voice came from the street, and there they beheld by the moonlight an exceedingly tall woman, clad in a snowy raiment, running in the direction of the lake, to which she was pointing with her long, meagre arm. In an instant she was out of sight, and the terror-stricken publican and his wife

closed the door, under the firm conviction that they had seen a banshee.

With fear increasing for the safety of their guest, they proceeded up stairs, and into his apartment. Mysterious powers! 'he was gone—yet the window was fastened on the inside, and there was no other way of egress in the room; neither had he escaped in visible form by the doors, for to have done so, he must have passed through the apartment where they were sitting. Indeed, it was for the purpose of watching him that they had remained up so long; for the publican had determined, as a last extremity, to have dogged him on his way — an idea of which had very likely occurred to the poet, and determined him on leaving the house by stealth. The way he effected it could never be discovered; the more they surmised the more they were involved in a labyrinth; at length, impatient of conjecture, Murphy, arousing the servant-girl to keep her mistress company, snatched up his hat, and flinging himself on a horse, without any rein but his stable halter, galloped at a furious rate on the road to Mucross. He intended to have gone in another direction to a grove, which had been a favorite resort of his friend; but Shelah, scorning all admonition, refused to move a step on any road but the one she chose; at length, yielding to her obstinacy, the impatient rider exclaimed, "Take your own way, you jade! but God be your guide."

The dawn was breaking, and it was such a morning as McDermott has elsewhere attempted to describe, when Murphy arrived within about three hundred paces of the lake ; but no further could he proceed ; for his mare, as if she had undergone an instant transformation from flesh to marble, stood suddenly still. “ O for the spur of Fin Mallin” for at that moment the glorious sun bounded up the heavens, revealing to his astonished and delighted eyes his dear, and as he had thought, utterly lost, friend, standing upon the margin of the wave. His appearance was as that of a person in a very ecstasy of pleasure ; — his hands clasped and close to his breast — his right shoulder raised to a level with his ear — and his eye fervently bent upon the deep, — which, — by the way, seemed to the publican as if enveloped in a thin veil of white hoar. Brief was the joy of poor Murphy ; — what seemed the figure of his friend, turning round, waved him an adieu ; then wheeling, with his face towards the flood, stood in attitude to plunge. “ Thus, dearest, am thine forever !” he exclaimed — they were his last words ; just then Shelah was loosed from her invisible fetters, and dashed toward the spot — it was too late ; the form had disappeared, but how, remained, and remains, a mystery. It did not appear to sink or to resolve ; but, as it were, instantly to become nothing. It is true, when the distracted horseman thundered down, he perceived

a circle forming rapidly upon the water as if caused by the sudden immersion of some large and heavy substance; but the spot was too shallow, and the wave too clear to have concealed a pebble from his search, much less the body of a man nearly six feet high.

For three successive weeks the lake was dragged every day, and every inquiry made throughout the country, but in vain; nothing positive could ever be heard of the fate of that mysterious stranger, neither has he left any documents by which he can be traced to his earlier home, or which give any clue as to the cause of his singular derangement; but he was often observed to kiss a small hair locket, which he ever wore suspended by a ribbon round his neck. — Haply he was the victim of love!

When the first burst of grief had subsided, and he was mourned as a first-born child, — Murphy collected his little effects together, which, however, were of no great value — the soul of his lost friend was too bountiful to brood over treasure in a chest — but such as he left were kept sacred as the relics of a saint. 'T is true his broken-hearted landlady sought for the black book with intent of committing it to the flames, as the source of all her guest's misfortunes; but no where was that black book to be found. The translation had well nigh shared the fate intended for the original; but her hand was stayed by

the remembrance that it was the production of a beloved friend — and long was that friend sincerely lamented in the hamlet — and if the heart-sent prayers of mortals can be of any service to the souls of the departed — McDermott, if dead, is at rest.

Canto First.



LORD NIAL.

Canto First.

THE sun on many an Eden looks,
And glads their bowers, and gilds their brooks,
What time he first unrobes his breast,
And floats at morn on Indian main,
Till the red waters of the west

Have wooed him to their charms again ;
And many a vale his beams make glad,
And many a hill, with wild flowers clad,
And many a mountain, crowned with snow,
And many a cascade's foamy flow,
And many a lake's transparent glow,

Rejoices in his ray ;
But O! he lights not in his line,
From morn's first blush till eve's decline,
Such hills and flowers and floods as thine,
Dear subject of my lay.

O for a bower on Mona's hill,
Where I might sit and sing;
I'd trace thy glories with a quill
Plucked from an eagle's wing;
So might my aspirations rise
Where e'er his wing should soar,
Now cleaving heavenward, lo! he plies
On realms unknown to pore;
And now, forsaking clouds and skies,
He turns to earth once more, —
Where yonder cloud-crowned rocks expand
Above the current's breast,
Defying the destroyer's hand,
Behold the "Eagle's nest."

Or lay me by thy wild cascade,
O Sullivan! whose deep brown shade
Obscures from human eye
Thy phrenzied foam — no partial gleams
Atween the thick set sorbos streams,
To tell when thou art nigh;
And expectation, mute the while,
Delighted, tracks the dark defile;
Yet not unmixed with fear;
For though the task entrancing be,

And dear thy deep wild harmony,
'T is terrible to hear.
The straggling streams and dark wood past,
The torrent's bed is gained at last,
And topling precipice.
Go hide thy head, presumptuous Art !
What claim hast thou upon the heart
To rival scene like this ?
Untired, the live long day I 'd gaze
Upon thy lonely shore,
And sing to thee my song of praise,
And time it to thy roar.

Where shall I find thy mate, Lough Lane ?
I 've searched the lovely world in vain,
And turning to my bower again,
Hung raptured on thy shore ;
And thought on all, or bright or vast,
I gazed on since I saw thee last ;
But as the mental vision passed,
I prized thee more and more ;
For O, beneath the heavens there 's not
So deeply blest — so dear a spot.
Whate'er our fancies may create,
Whate'er our souls would contemplate, —

Wood — valley — mountain — garden — grot,
And streams meandering flow.

By heaven! it is a noble sight,
From tall Croom Glauna's heath-crowned height,
—When clouds are few, and winds are light,
And Sol looks down in noontide might,—

The scene that burns below.

But O, when storms are on the wing,
When floods descend, and whirlwinds ring,
When cloud on cloud, disordered, driven,
Sweep o'er the darkened arch of heaven,

And lightning tears the hill:

When curls the white steed's foamy mane,
Along the tortured waves of Lane,
When thunders shake the mountains round,
And echo roars with seven-fold sound,

'T is even more glorious still.

O 't is a world so wild, so fair,
So free from earthly stain and care,
An angel might seclude him there,

Content through endless hours; —
Might leave his home beyond the skies,
To bask in beam of beauty's eyes,
In such an earthly paradise,
Nor sigh for heavenly bowers.

* * * * *

'T was evening, still the broad sun gave
His glories to the world beneath,
And all was peaceful as the grave,
And bright as martyrs' dreams of death ;
And many a stately mansion towered
From groves of sorbos half embowered ;
But now they seemed all desolate, —
The moss was gathering at the gate —
No living thing had passed of late —
And music breathed of love no more —
And every thing the semblance bore
Of bloody hearth, and naked wall,
And chieftain slaughtered in his hall,
And ravished maid, and strangled heir ;
— The hand of rapine had been there.
But one amidst the rest there stood
Upon the margin of the flood,
Which, if magnificence could bless,
Had been the home of happiness.
'T was all so beautiful to view,
You feared it was as transient too.
For O! it seemed a thing of air,
Not built, but raised by magi there ;
Some beautiful, but baseless thing,

That came and went on fairy wing —
More bright than aught of earth could be,
But lacking earth's solidity;
For as it quivered in the ray,
It seemed in act to fade away.

Before that blissful solitude
There rose a barrier broad and rude,
Of huge and rugged rocks upiled,
On other each sublimely wild,
As if to keep from earthly ken
Its more than earthly splendor then.
A gentler fence might better screen
The vale of beauty pent between;
For 'midst that theatre of rocks
An Eden smiled, whose glory mocks
Conception — no, my fancy still
Mirrors that garden bright and strong;
But O the minstrel lacks the skill
To weave its beauties with his song.

There glanced and laughed the silver rill,
There dashed the torrent from its hill,
And beds of wild flowers breathed and bloomed
While nature gazed so calm that hour,

The lingering breezes they perfumed
Scarce stirred the tendril of a flower ;
And these were in their summer blow,
Though Turk still wore his cap of snow,
And such their odor and their glow
They kept the wild bee on the wing,
Entranced, yet shy, and wondering
To find a world of buds more fair
And fragrant than its own flowers there.
And there was many a grot so neat,
With moss and stone and shell replete,
And many a beautiful alcove
Too lone and fair for aught but love.
But ye who woo their charms, beware —
The tempter hath his dwelling there,
On banks of velvet buds reclined ;
And such his influence o'er the mind,
When hands are clasped, and lips are pressed,
That reason might be lulled to rest.
And there were banks and caves and dells,
And winding pathways paved with shells,
And brooklets flowing to the brink,
And wild deer bending there to drink,
And young birds, with their hearts of glee,
Leaping about so merrily ;

And a thousand other beautiful things, —
The bull-bird's song, and his shining wings,
And the noble river that rolled below,
In a calm, unruffled but sweeping flow,
Fed by a hundred tribute streams,
That leaped into his breast like beams,
Thus wasting the flow of their mountain pride,
To swell the wave of one mightier tide.
Even such is man. As we singly shine,
We are each in ourselves a thing divine,
But mixed in the crowd of a king's array,
Are lost in his splendor, and borne away.
Imagine the Eden you pine to see —
Imagine whatever a star may be —
Look by the light of your fancy round,
And engender an image of fairy ground; —
Look to the home of the soul above,
And embody a vision of bloom and love, —
And then, when your spirit can strain no more
When fancy and hope have ceased to soar,
The brightest birth of your toil will fail
To rival the bliss of that mountain vale,
As it shone that hour to my raptured view,
And then it was all so lonely too !

Beside a fountain where the ray
Of sunset trembled through the shade
Of a tall laurel, fair as May,
Reclined —— Was that an earthly maid?
Could such transcendent beauty be
The dowry of mortality!

Come thou! O thou, whose deaf blue eye
First made me what I may not tell —
That secret must forever lie
Locked in my breast as in a cell.
Come thou! O thou, whose name inspires
The minstrel's hope, the minstrel's strain —
Who bade me wake the slumbering wires,
Yet told me they were waked in vain;
Come to my soul's conception, come —
Over the desert and the foam —
Which heaven, or chance, or what you choose,
Fling 'twixt the minstrel and his muse.
Believe me — yes! no aid I seek
From the twin-sisters of the Greek;
Should other muse my thoughts command,
I rhyme alone by head and hand,
The language flows, the numbers chime;
But where 's the soul should light the rhyme?

I clasp my breast, my brow in vain,
There breathes no spirit o'er the strain,
And if that spirit e'er shall wreath
One verse to save my name from death,
Twining it with the locks of time,
'T is thou that must inspire the rhyme.
Come to me, then, my spirit's light !
That as I wake the chords tonight,
I may describe the charms that hung
Round that lone form, so fair, so young,
While gazing upon thy bright brow,
For she was then what thou art now.
But vain my spirit's loftiest thrill ;
Those charms, though mirrored in my breast,
Even as the passions they instil,
Are all too deep to be expressed.

I might her cheek of bloom define,
And brow of snow, and eye of fire ;
But that which made them most divine
Belongs not to the poet's lyre.
A gust of impulse from within,
As from a mind undoomed to sin ;
A living halo, bright, benign,
The very mockery of decline,

A deep mysterious charm unknown,
Something far more than soul alone;
At least, the souls that worm their way
From out our chambers of decay,
Dimmed ere their glories reach the eye,
By the base shrines in which they lie.

Her form was as her face, a thing
The minstrel may not praise or sing;
And yet, its loveliness was such,
He could not praise or sing too much;
So full of life, and bloom, and glow,
Sure none but woman's could seem so;
Yet all so buoyant, slight, and fair,
You 'd deem its home was in the air;
That little sympathy it felt
With the base clod on which it dwelt.
In sooth, she was in all too fair

For habitant of this bleak world;
And yet there lurked a tinge of care
Along her cheek, — and the uncurled
Light chesnut tresses, floating round,
In strings of gold, along the ground,
Disordered, but so lovely still,
They could not be improved by skill, —

Portrayed (howe'er she seemed to be
The creature of a nobler birth)
That she had known the mystery
Of sorrows, only known on earth.

Her garb was simple, — save her zone,
Nor gem, nor pearl, their lustre lent ;
Her loveliness was all her own,
Nor needed art's embellishment.
She held an ivory lyre, inlaid
With gems all sparkling, and so bright,
It seemed, beneath that laurel's shade,
As they were melting into light ;
And as her fingers swept the chords,
She sang, and with such wondrous skill,
The echo of her sorrowing words
Seems ringing through my memory still.
And the birds came around her the while she sang,
And the rocks to the thrill of her wild notes rang,
And there was one echo more strangely dire
Than the saddest voice of the mountain choir ;
But the soul of music sublimed its gloom,
As tho' it had burst from some minstrel's tomb,
Who was waked by the voice of that mystic strain,
And made his lorn harp to respond again ;

Far it rose not just as the song arose,
But only chimed in as a chorus close.

SONG.

He 's away to the hills, I shall see him no more,
For the sword of the foeman is red with his gore.

Echo — Red with his gore.

The banshee thrice called on his name as she fled,
And the star of his fortune looked murky and red.

Echo — Murky and red.

And I passed by the tomb where his fathers lie low,
And methought they responded the sighs of my wo.

Echo — Sighs of my wo.

I will hie me away to my bower in the deep,
And I'll gaze on the hill where he perish'd, & weep.

Echo — perished, and weep.

And I'll hang up my lyre on a lone willow tree,
In some desert, as emblems of sorrow and me.

Echo — Sorrow and me.

Her lyre falls from her at the close,
But still her bosom's anguish flows:

—— “ ’T were but a mockery to be gay,
Or I had chosen a happier lay ;
For the dark fears that round me glow
Need little aid from fancied wo ;
But then, again, a lighter strain
Would only aggravate the pain ;
My spirit revels in its grief,
Wo, wo its torture,—its relief ;
O! well I deem this stubborn gloom
Prophetic of my soldier's doom.
Could I but join him in his sleep,
I would not weep as now I weep ;
For then, however wild the grief,
’T were subject to its great relief,
An hour of anguish, breast to breast,
A broken heart, and all was rest.—
But thus all ruined, doomed to be
A thing of mind eternally ; —
Ay, through the lapse of ceaseless time,
Without the solace even of crime,
 To linger o’er a vain regret ;
With all its trouble — all its jar.
The human lot is happier far
 To rest and to forget.—
If withering things can feel the glow
That racks a deathless maiden so,

Where'er my truant warrior pines,
Whate'er his visions — his designs,
Dare I unbreast the mystery,
That which I am — what he might be,
This night he 'd come to me below,
Leave death, leave vengeance, glory, wo,
Even though he feared the plunge must sever
His spirit from its hope for ever.
But oh! it may not be — the breath
Of Samiel were a lingering death,
Compared to that, such word of fear
Would pour into a mortal ear.
Some dark allusions to our state,
(Too cruelly indefinite)
To raise the wonder, prompt the wit,
Are all our rigid laws permit.

“ Commingled with the heavens around,
Which girdle in this wave profound,
The guardian monarch of our race
Reigns like a god — pervading space.
No eye has seen his presence there,
Still indistinct and light as air,
Save when at May-day morn we rise,
To pay the season's sacrifice,

He robes him in a hoary haze,
Like summer dew on fields of maize,
To blunt the prying wonderer's gaze;
Thrice happy he, and blest of men,
Whose eye may note our pageant then;
For if to mortal's ken laid bare,
The bliss he sees he soon may share.
I would not ask that shade to lend
 A solace for a wound like mine;
'T were but to aid me to offend —
 To break those laws he knows divine.
But he can lift the film sublime,
That veils the womb of unborn time;
Nor will he chide, if such relief
Can mitigate a maiden's grief.
Suspense is torture — weal or wo,
If such his will, the test I'll know,
Hail mighty spirit! Prince of Air!
And hearken to your votary's prayer."

Up rose the sorrowing maiden then,
And knelt her by the brink of Lane,
So lowly that her locks of pride
Hung floating in its golden tide;
And he that gazed with ardent eye
Had seen a movement in the sky —

Ten million particles of space
All verging to a central base.
And now more palpable they grow,
As still centering, on they go ;
And now an outline marks the swarm —
And now they darken into form —
And now upon the lake there shone
A rival glory to the sun,
For through the broad heaven's azure light
That halo loomed distinct and bright,
And in the midst a being stood
Of more than human magnitude,
Or human glory ; — man might bow
 Submissive — feel himself a clod,
Before that shade's eternal brow,
 And deem he pleaded to a god.
I know him now — his eye of flame,
Which tears could soften — nothing tame ;
His lordly amplitude of breast,
But, more than all, his wolf-dog crest,
Reveals the hero to my view —
— Hail to the chief O' Donohoe !

If loftiest beauty were a test
Of happiness, that Knight was blest ;

But still his brow bore more th' impress
Of sorrow than of happiness ;
And yet upon its page sublime
Lurked nothing that was born of crime.
But he had seen his home of pride,
The happiest isle on ocean's tide ;
He passed — and lo ! that isle became
A clime of rapine — then, O ! shame —
An abject thing without a name,—
Condemned — abandoned — pillaged — riven,
—A very plague-spot under heaven.
This saw he, and he curst the hand
That wrought such ruin to his land.
Even from the mansions of the blest
He saw it, and it vexed his rest,
And cast its shadow o'er his brow,
And hence that look of sorrow now.
But when the maiden caught his eye,
His brow grew cloudless as the sky,
And sooth it was a dangerous one
For lady's glance to rest upon,
Nor could more fearful charms than hers
Draw spirits down for worshippers ;
And well that lordly vision knew
His duty, and performed it too.

His right hand to his lips were pressed,
His left done homage at his breast,
Then bending slowly where he stood,
His right knee rested on the flood;
He had not learned on earth alone
The tribute due to beauty's throne —
So gracefully he paid it then,
So like a god he rose again.

How glanced the kneeling girl that hour —
How revelled in her beauty's power :
Even misery for a time was taught
To mingle in the whirl it wrought,
Whate'er she was — or mould or shade,
She triumphed in the homage paid,
And yet she trembled to make bare
Why she had called that spirit there;
But knew he aught of woman then,
'T would cost him little skill to ken,
Even by her fears, to make it known,
The cause was love — was love alone.
At length with many a mingled sigh,
She bared her bosom's mystery.

“Thou guardian of this sacred tide !

When thou hast heard thy suppliant's will,

Ere yet thy lips begin to chide,

Suppose thyself in manhood's pride,

A thing of blood and passion still,

Even as thou wert in by-gone time.—

When he that 's pure to judge essays,

Who shall seem innocent of crime,

If others by himself he weighs ?

So, thus : perchance thou mayest esteem

My hope a folly — love a dream —

Even as thyself art placed above,

Alike, the scourge of hope or love ;

But canst thou feel, by memory's aid,

The pangs that rack the lover's breast,

Thou wilt not chide that hapless maid,

Who broke a mighty spirit's rest ; —

One instant more, and all's confessed.

Shall tyrant's might o'erwhelm the brave,

Or shall the freeman crush the slave ?

Must Erin ever bide the rein—

Or be herself ‘The blest’ again ?

And what shall be Lord Nial's doom —

Or life with Mary — or the tomb ?”

Brief paused that spirit to reply,
—To make his sufferings known;
For there was anguish in his eye,
And sorrow in his tone.

“Lady! ere the morrow’s sun
Has cleared the mist from Mangerton,
Swords shall clash, and blood shall run;
Freedom sickens at the sight —
Infamy shall win the fight;
Foreign boor and foreign thong
Shall long pollute your home of song:
But when at length its cup is flowing,
When all is gone that’s worth the going,
When they who fear, betray, and hate her,
Can do no more to desolate her;
When even her name’s a theme for jest, —
Then comes the trial and the test.—
Heaven is more just than in her fall;
The end is vengeance — glory, all!
For after all her miseries past,
When dawns one happier hour at last,
If vengeance fail to bless that hour,
Even freedom were a niggard dower;

Her primal glory's bloodiest stain,
Blood — blood alone — can cleanse again."

All this came fluent, note by note,
As 't were a lesson known by rote ;
But here he paused, and seemed in doubt,
And then his broad black eye he turned
To where the day-god on his route
Toward the western waters burned ;
And when his glance had ceased to roam,
He peered into the boundless dome
With such intensity of gaze,
That even amid that sunset blaze
(Which to a less celestial sight
Had seemed to melt the heavens in light,
So rife with all that fires the thought)
He singled out the orb he sought.

" Upon Lord Nial's natal star,
'Mid signs of hardship — glory — war,
Is one lone spot of beauty shining,
Beyond the scope of my divining.
I've traced him to his latest field,
I've seen him drooping on his shield —

His eyes were swimming for their close,
His very arm had sought repose,
Though girdled by a host of foes.
It may be death and that bright flame,
The semblance of the hero's fame;
But nothing lustrous to its core
Had ever told of death before.
Whate'er it means,—augmented time,
Or glory reaped from future rhyme,—
It leaves his final destiny
Involved in mystery even to me.
Lord Nial's fortune none may tell;
Maiden of the Mere! — farewell."

Again that lordly vision bowed —
Again resumed his bearing proud —
Then wasting from his centre slow,
Grew faint, as spreading vapors grow;
And now is he, the "Pride of Lane,"
A portion of the heavens again.

Now colder grow the heavens, and tame,
Save in the west, where all is flame;
All gold and glory round the verge,
Still deepening downward to the surge ;

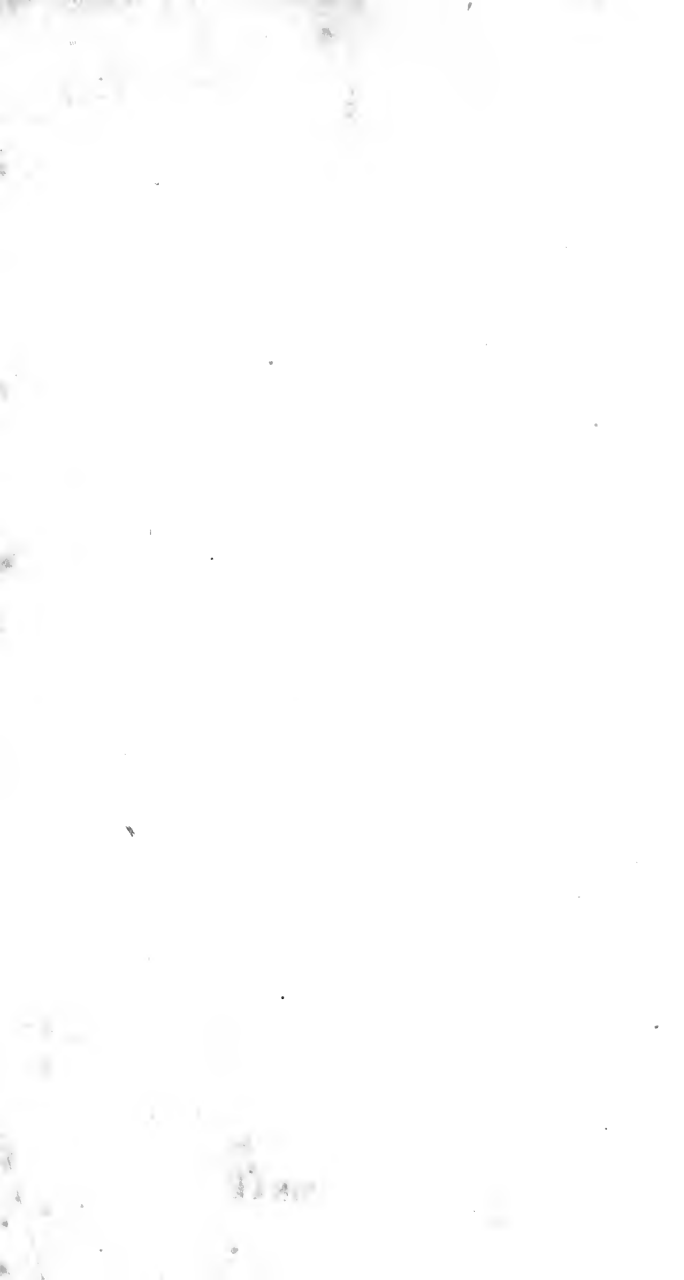
Nor have the waters dimmed its ire —
Both tide and sky are wrapt in fire ;
But now it wanes so faint and far,
Here peeps a planet, there a star ;
And now the latest haze of light
Dies on the wave, and all is night ;
And Cynthia palely 'gins to throw

Her lights along the spangled line,
Silvering Mount Thual's crowns of snow,
And Innisfallen's groves of pine.

And the rush of the waves, or their breezy song,
As they leap from the cliffs, or go smooth along,
And that boundless twitter, the sighs of Earth,
While giving her flowers and her herbage birth,
Which awakes in the heart such a calm delight,
But can only be heard on a peaceful night —
And the songs of the nightingales low in the boughs
As they woo the young roses, & warble their vows,
And the leap of the trout from the lake or the stream,
As they feast on the atoms that dance in the beam ;
And the sigh of the zephyrs, all fragrant then,
Was all you could hear in that mountain glen.

END OF CANTO FIRST.

Canto Second.



Canto Second.

“ Why sleeps my Mary?—the moon is high,
 And there's not a cloud betwixt earth and sky,
 And there's not a wave on the dark blue sea,
 — Then awake, my Mary, and come to me ;

“ For the clear calm night, and its cloudless ray---
 Or the silvery breast of the waveless sea,
 Have no charms for me when my love's away,
 — Then awake, my Mary, and come to me.”

'T was thus a minstrel Knight essayed
 To chase the slumbers from the maid,
 Who lately on that moonlit shore
 Was pining for her troubadour ;
 And oft, full oft, his eye was turned
 To where a lonely taper burned —

He knew it lighted Mary's bower,
For he had watch'd it many an hour,
When she to whom he poured his lay,
Perchance had deemed him far away.

His noble roan beside him stood,
With breast and flank of foam and blood,
For he had come a weary road,
Nor sought the path, nor spared the goad:
Nor came he then like lover gay,
Bedecked as for a holiday,
But cased in steel from neck to knee,
And armed completely cap-a-pee;
For he was fresh from recent fight,
A wooing, wandering, "Red Branch Knight."

A better warrior never sank,
His rowel in a charger's flank,
And if his lordly brow we trace —
And monarch form and gait of grace —
A statelier never woke a chord
Of worship to his maid adored.
Yet more that warrior's brow displayed
Of war than moonlit serenade;
Nor was the semblance falsely worn,
Though still his life was in its morn,

For he was born upon the plain,
Mid shouts of triumph and of pain —
And bellowing hills and battle cry
Was his first birth-day's lullaby.
And he was cradled in the camp,
On beds of wild fern rude, or damp,
For home, nor bower, his mother knew,
Save that which screened her hero too.
And even his childhood's toys displayed
Some token of his father's trade.
A dagger's haft his teething gear —
His hobby horse some trooper's spear—
His tutors every warrior wild,
Who loved the gambols of the child,
And, sooth to say, are none so mild.
The bravest still of every coast
Delight in childhood's smiles the most —
For the same impulse that doth move
The soul to battle, leads to love:
So they, young Nial's fostering clan,
Were sires and soldiers to a man.
And oft when swept the foe in sight,
And freedom haply lay in flight,
Camp — treasure — all — were left in scorn,
But not the little battle born,

Who chiefly sped from the attack
Buckled to some rude trooper's back,
That in a distant home, may be,
Had some as blithe and young as he.
And as a birthright, still he kept

His trade of battle — his to boast
The first and bloodiest brand that swept,
When swarming from their own rude coast,
The wolves of Denmark, wild for gore,
Labored in vain to win the shore
Their sires had lost — and at the time
Of base McDonough's awful crime,
He mustered with the sacred few
Who fled, because they scorned to sue.

Dejected — heartless — all but slaves !
They sought the mountains and the caves.
But, though their numbers hourly waned,
By famine — hardship — slaughter — drained,
They gloried to be still unchained —
Still free to perish ; for they knew
All efforts fruitless to subdue
The tyrant league that crowded round them —
That harrassed, slaughtered, all but bound them ;

For oh! nor hope nor heaven could give
A boon for which they cared to live ;
For so their hearts were seared, that even
Were freedom self-vouchsafed by Heaven —
They 'd rather bleed to seal the dower,
Than live to share it — Many an hour
Life's holiest ties were riven and gone,
All they most cherished laid to rest —
So, if one hope still lingered on,
It was to be no more — or blest.

Within a mountain's solitude,
Forsaken, crossed, but unsubdued ;
The remnant of that sacred band
Had made their last, their feeblest stand ;
And there in council, even tonight,
Around their altars kneeling lowly,
Their eyes all sparkling with the light
Of a deep fervor, pure and holy,
Untainted by a stain of earth,
They poured their spirits' homage forth :

“ The trump has sounded—
And the strife is o'er ;
Forsa'en — surrounded,
We can toil no more ;

Our crimes forgiven,
And a warrior's grave,
Are all from heaven
That we need or crave.

"All, all are hither,
Or within the tomb,
None left to wither
In a world of gloom;
Not a tear of sorrow
To lament our fall;
For the grave tomorrow
Must receive us all.

"O THOU who made us,
With such hearts of flame,
Wilt Thou e'er upbraid us
That we rushed from shame?
Our hopes are too many,
And our souls too free,
To bow to any,
Save, O God! to thee.

"Then grant, MOST HIGHEST,
From thine holy throne,
By the hope that reliest

On thine aid alone,
One hour of glory,
Ere our toil shall cease;
And bosoms gory,
And a bed of peace."

Even so that band of warrior men
Poured forth their godlike feelings then,
As meekly, but with conscious pride,
They asked of HIM who loves the free,
For one bright hour before they died,
One feast of swords in battle tide —
To finish their career with pride,
And perish 'midst the jubilee.

Never was man more deeply wed
To Freedom, than the chief who led
That band to glory— it was he,
Who now, beside his charger's rein,
Sang to his lyre so pensively ;
Nor has he waked the chords in vain ;
For she, his spirit's pole star, hung
All ecstasy, the while he sung,
But kept her sacred to his gaze,
Until he ceased his hymn of praise —

For woman still delights to feel

Her empire even when ruin's by

— Delights to see her votary kneel

— To hear his every tribute sigh.

Thus Mary now ; but ere the thrill

Of his last breathing wire was still,

She sprang to meet her love below :

But how shall minstrel paint her charms,

As, robed in beauty's brightest glow,

She sank within her warrior's arms ?

A feeling deep, but undefined,

Of her love's fate, had exiled now

That maiden coyness from her mind,

Which haply else at such a meeting,

Had urged her to a colder greeting,

To wear, perchance, a cloudier brow ;

But now each little wish to chide

Was borne before her passion's tide ;

She saw her love as on a rock,

High tottering from an earthquake's shock,

And ere that rock was hurled below,

Could she look coldly on him ? — No !

Ah no ! that hour was all too fleet

For love to waste it in deceit ;

Such dalliance, and at such a time,
Has less of modesty than crime ;
On happier night she had betrayed ,
The woman half — and half the maid ;
But now, distracted — doubting — lonely —
A woman all, — a woman only,
She seemed, whate'er she was, the stranger
Of every hope, of every danger,
From hell beneath, or heaven above her, —
But that which darkened round her lover.
And now upon his heart she lies,

Her arms around his shoulders thrown,
Nor blushed that his, in ruder guise,
Had formed a girdle for her own.

And there they hung — how still, how long,

The muse forbids her bard to trace ;
'T would ill become his vulgar song

To note the length of love's embrace.
And they were silent, each through fear
To speak what each must grieve to hear —
She, her lorn spirit's imaged wo,
And he, that it was truly so. —
That all was lost — even hope below.
But what can lovers' lips conceal ?

Words are of life no living part,

And even at best but half reveal

The hope — the anguish of the heart ;
While every stifled smile or sigh
Is mirrored in the living eye ;
But though it bares the spirit's glow,
'T is chiefly still its glass of wo :
The beacon — the conductive power
Of passion, in affliction's hour,
When every glance, or bares its own,
Or makes one other's miseries known ;
Now prone to furnish, now attract,
Just even as thunder-clouds do act ;
Whiles grasping at the liquid chain —
Whiles flashing back its light again.

Alas for him who soon shall be

A clod, and a nonentity !

Who knew the morrow's light must close
Around his reeking heart's repose !

'T is true, no busy fiend within

Gave note of unrepented sin ;

No fear knew he of future shame —

Of whitening frost and filtering flame —

And prison rock, and scorpion rod ; —

He knew the stroke, whene'er it came,

That made a carcase of his frame,

Would send him to his God.
But still a fear came o'er him then,
And every glance confessed
That he had rather breathe with men
Than dwell among the blessed!

The falsely valiant, when they go,
Affect a will to meet the blow,
But roistering speech, and ruffian air,
Are still the types of fear's despair;
Yea, even the self-destroyer fain
Would linger, though he cuts the vein.
The brave — the wretched — or the just —
May smile upon that sleep of dust;
And yet, even they shall own, at length,
What blessed things are life and strength;
And at the issue shrink before
That awful thought — to be no more;
For as we feel life's latest ray,
Upon the margin of decay,
Strange thoughts will crowd upon the brain,
Not felt, or feebly felt, till then;
Home, friendship, and a thousand things,
To which departing memory clings
With rapture, — even despair and strife
Woo the lorn spirit back to life.

But are they lover — then, O then,
 (But are they loved in turn again,
By one torn heart, still doomed to throb
Alone amidst the desert mob ?)—

 So far as may become such men,
The world renounced, abjured, defying,
They doubly feel the dread of dying —
Feel, by that mystic bond of heart,
From which the captives ne'er depart,
That when deputed to their lair,
Her heart of hearts the doom must share;
So, in their essence theirs live on,
A portion of the withering one;
While they, poor lingering things! are driven,
With scarcely half their souls to heaven.

Amid the whirl of hopeless strife,
Of smoking city, reeking life —
And all that marks the waster's wrath,
Which still beset his every path,
Nord Nial's best of hope and prayer
Were given to vengeance, hate, despair :
Lost was each tribute stream of wo,
In his deep sorrow's ocean flow ;
Even love itself was crushed beneath
The stroke that caused his freedom's death.

Each star of hope had left its sphere,
And ceased to burn—or burned in gloom—
For not one ray was left to cheer,
—Then what did hearts like his do here?
Must they but weep around the bier,
That should have shared the tomb?—
Ah no! as soon the day live on
Shorn of the beams 't was fed upon.—
But when the final hour was cast,
And even the morrow seemed as past,
Began his soul to search abroad,
For all that weaned it still from God;
Then stood that girl sublime—alone—
His best—his beautiful—his own—
Whate'er his fancies imaged forth,
His heaven—ay, more than heaven, on earth.
If heaven be love, then was his love
A portion of the realm of bliss,
For never yet was soul above,
Warmed by a flame more pure than his.
Then could he wish that true soul driven,
To bow to more immortal eyes?
Rebellious thought—no—not, by heaven!
To the queen beauty's of the skies.
'T was this wild passion—not his will—
That bound his spirit earthward still.

But O! how vain such homage now —
Or even before his mountain vow —
Should his, Lord Nial's, offspring swell

The servile crowds of after times?
—As soon they peopled those of hell!

For more illustrious crimes.

The more his passions bound him here,

He pined for freedom, — wooed the grave,
Such love as theirs is hard to steer,
And time might see — Oh! thought of fear —
Himself the sire — his Mary dear

The mother — of a slave!

'T was wrong tonight to risk the greeting,

The torture of a farewell meeting,

Canst thou, Sir Chief, no succor bring?

Thy presence only nerves the sting.

Ill skilled the leech that rakes the heart,

Before he probes the wounded part.

'T is less the feeling than the fear

Makes all our ills so hard to bear.

Life is so brief a thing at most,

One instant's calm is something lost —

If wo must come, so let it come!

Why hail it with a herald drum?

The ruin should at once have burst —

Better to feel, than fear the worst —

Unless that ruin bared to view
May teach us to avoid it too.
Suspense is torture, and its train
Of hopes but after throbs of pain
To memory, if they cheer in vain—
Even as those traitor gleams of light
That instant glad and shun the sight,
Add seeming darkness to the night.
There is a solace in the grief
That knows not — looks for no relief;
For deepest woe alone can share
The consolation of despair —
That feeling which can still embalm
The venom of Fate's deadliest curse,
For when she's done her worst to damn,
We know she can 't do worse !

Besides, young warrior, art thou sure
Thy faith is fixed, thine heart secure?
That nothing, not even love, can force
Thy spirit from its destined course?

This even, before his altar's light,
He thought so,—thinks he so tonight?
Proves fame or love the mightiest now?
Dull querist ! what a dreamer thou —

The human passion still must cower
To every impulse in its hour.
The brave have shunned the battle's wrath, —
The coward braved it in its path : —
Keep thou from every toil aloof,
Thou hast not proved thy spirit's proof,
We never know how deep the abyss
That yawns beneath the precipice,
Until we have trembled on its brink : —
—Lord Nial was afraid to think ;
For when he felt that seraph form
Hang at his heart so wild and warm,
Gazed on that all too heavenly brow,
Rife with her bosom's conflict now —
He felt — forgive him Heaven ! — he felt
The purpose of his fixed soul melt,
Forgive him Freedom — (thought is free,
Nor bows to weak supremacy)
He almost cursed his league with thee,
And half unmanned, he thrice essayed
 To speak — but thrice the deep words died
Upon his tongue, and all betrayed
 Emotions which he strove to hide ;
Nor did the voice of playfulness,
Assumed to hide his soul's distress,
That spoke at length, dispel the wo
Which caused that Lady's grief to flow ;

And yet she took his mood the while,
And robed her sadness in a smile.

“Nay, why, my girl, so dark and sad?”

“If my cheek be gloomy, my heart is glad.”

“Then wear it, sweet love, in thy smiles tonight,
And make jealous the moon with thy beauty’s light.”

“If so would Lord Nial or share its ray?
Or ride by the light of those smiles away?
Nay, look not thus; for ’t is ever so —
So seldom you come, and so soon you go!
How oft have I pined for you all day long,
And lo! when you came, & you know ’twas wrong,
If a bugle note rang on yon mountain’s height,
Then alas for your love, and her beauty’s light.”

“But then, my Mary, when I went,
’T was as from heaven to banishment;
And had I scorned that call divine,
Say, were I worthy love like thine?”

“True love — sweet love, would cling to life.”

“What! must thy lord a caitiff be?”

By heavens ! thou wouldst not be the wife
Of any save the free !”

“Thou knowst me, Nial — well, ’t is past,
And thou and Heaven are here at last ;
But mark the purchase — though the blast
This night should split their horn in twain,
If blown for thee — that blast is vain.”

Where shall that Knight find refuge now ?
’T were ruin to unbreast his vow—
To feed her hope — no, misery ! no,
What ruin like a gilded wo !
The sequel, when the veil is past,
Comes on so terrible at last —
If ought can save her now from madness,
’T is soul-subduing song or sadness ;
For mirth, nor pleasure’s wild careers,
Can bring such balm to grief as tears —
Since thou hast rushed upon thy fate,
Instruct her to anticipate
Thy flight tonight, and doom tomorrow,
Even by some kindred maiden’s sorrow,
With all the solace that you may ;
But do not, on your hopes, betray.
So deemed that chief, nor deemed in vain,

Whate'er has been the issue then —
And seized his tiny harp again :
— “ There lived a knight, that loved as me —
His fate the same ; he heard the blast —
The maid was in her agony,
Clinging around him to the last.
But ere he fled that maid divine,
He seized his lyre, as I do mine,
And sung —— myself, upon a day,
Composed the sequel of the lay :

SONG.

“ Cease, my lady — why, Oh ! why
Suppress the flame that Freedom lighted ?
Would you bid your lover fly,
To see his name, his glory blighted ?
True, I 've turned me from the strife,
But not because that strife disgraces —
'T was but to renew my life
One moment in my love's embraces.

“ Call me rebel ! true, love, true,
My hopes are wild, my cause rejected —
But when I 'm false to them or you,
I 'll forfeit rank with heaven's elected ;
See our country's trophies burn —
Fane destroyed, and freedom riven,

Maid of Erin! — shall I spurn

My brightest hopes save thee and heaven?

“ Now the dogs of war are out —

Now contending swords are clashing —

Hark! the sons of freedom shout! —

Lo! the blades of freedom flashing; —

’Tis my signal — Lady, now

What Love commingled, Fate must sever,

This — and this — upon thy brow,

And thus we part — O God — for ever!

“ Rushed that hero to the field,

Proudly flamed his pennon o’er him,

Fury flashed around his shield,

And slave and tyrant crouched before him.

But O! at length a felon brand

Unloosed the soul which heaven had cherished,

Sighing ‘ Angels guide my band!’

For freedom and his God he perished.

“ On that field of slaughter yet,

A sculptured tomb records his story,

Never shall his fame be set,

For Freedom gave his name to Glory,

Nor long the lady mourned his fall,

Her name with his that trophy graces,

And there till death is bound in thrall
They slumber locked in love's embraces."

'T is not on summer's eve serene,
When all is light along the sky;
'T is when in broken glimpses seen,
Through the dark vapours hurrying by,
The rainbow's form looks loveliest,
—So woman's eye seems doubly blest
When charged with storm — when half way hid
Beneath the bright but downcast lid
Through which the half stolen glances stream,
Like watery sunbeams, mist and flame;
When tired of lingering, hope rebels,
And sorrow pales the damask cheek,
And the torn bosom heaves and swells
As if the indignant heart would break.
While breathed that chieftain's song of wo,
Gan pulse to throb, and tear to flow
Spreading a still sublimer glow
Of beauty o'er that cheek of light,
Which erst a moment, seemed so far
Above our sunniest dreams of bright,
That any change could only mar.

But when he spoke of buried maid,

 Why shrunk that lady? — had the dart
Of death upon her breast been laid
She had not looked more wildly then —
But soon her brow grew calm again.

 “ And well they sleep even heart to heart,
No hope to wither — ill to brave —
What balm for sorrow like the grave?
But little solace this to her,
Who may not share the sepulchre;
Who sees her lover's record stone,
And writhes and burns and still lives on;
On, — on, through countless hours for ever,
To meet not — mix not — never — never.”

“ We will, my girl — we shall — we will!

 Love laughs at bondage — swords are vain;
Come on! their bloodiest shall not kill —
 And we shall meet — meet oft, again.”

“ Love! where?”

 “ Where love, my girl, meets best;
Where chains nor bind, nor swords molest;
Where ravished home, and hope no more
Require the destined soldier's gore.

So, lady, be thy spirits light.
Even though we part — ay, part tonight.”

“ Tonight! — no — no — bid dark be bright,
Bid earth be shattered from its base,
And all its parts resolved in space,
But name no solace to ensnare,
Save such as thou wilt stay to share.
Nay, turn not thus thine eyes away,
My best of heaven is in their ray ;
Even when I lost their lustre now,
My soul grew dark, — then how, Oh ! how,
When sounds that withering blast to sever,
Shall I resign their light forever ?”

* * * * *

“ What ! changeless still — can nothing move
Thine heart to pity, or to love ?
In many a brighter hour gone by,
'T was thine to sue, and mine to fly ;
Or have I lost the charms that won ?
Or is my lord a changling grown ?
— Forgive me, love, I meant it not ;
The word came forth without the thought ;
I knew thee better ! — ha ! — no — no !
'T was but the echo of my wo ;
In mercy, start not — look not so !”

“Hark! hark! it is my warning horn —
Hold heart — hold soul, thine own, till morn.

O Mary! for my soul's dear bliss,
Be merciful! Be ——— There! away!

Again that bugle's fearful bray!

Thus, then, this long, last, lingering kiss : —

Perdition follows if I stay!

Within thy bowers may angels dwell,

May all that 's blissful be thy lot.

Oh! Mary, must I say farewell?

Forget me not! — forget me not!!”

* * * * *

Is Nial gone? — no! still he lingers;

He could not rudely loose the finger

That lady, in her last distress,

Had locked around her warrior's neck,

With such spasmodic eagerness,

As drowning wretches grasp the wreck;

And could he even have riven him through!

His will was all too feeble now

To tear him from those lips of glue

That burned upon his aching brow.

“Stay, stay, but one brief instant stay —

One other, — till the morrow's sun

Has curled the mists from Mangerton;

The moon shines out as bright as day,
And the heavens are calm and the earth is gay,
And the zephyrs are kissing the flowers in play,
And shedding their sweets upon land and bay —
Look out upon that blissful scene,
The moon-gilt hill, and lake serene,
In bright and shadowy beauty drest,
Wooring us to its tranquil breast ;
Then come with me — our bark so light
— Awaits us, — must it wait in vain ?
I know that if we part tonight,
 We 'll never, never meet again ;
Thy steed is tired, thy brow is warm,
The sky, methinks, is charged with storm —
Stay — stay — Oh, stay but one short hour ;
I 've decked for thee my costliest bower,
And placed therein such wondrous things !
Surpassing Art's imaginings.

You saw the scarf your Mary wove —
No — no, you did not — well, my love,
'T is scarlet of the sunniest green —

Blue — blue I mean, as autumn skies,
With fringe of gold, and flowers between,
Of green, and pink, and purple dyes, —
Mine eyes are weak — look on those eyes ;

Are they not weak? — as well they may,
And Oh! how wretched the maid who plies

The lonely hours from day to day,
And finds at length, (like a certain maid,
That once hung on her knight in a moonlit glade)
Instead of the thanks and the smiles she prized,
Her labor lost, and her gifts despised.
But hush — my handmaid's lyre on high!
True, true, sweet love, tonight we try
Our minstrel skill — thyself to be
The umpire of our minstrelsy —
Wilt thou deny me this poor boon?
—Then go. —

I knew thou couldst not go;
The sun would cease to light his moon,
Ere Nial serve his Mary so."

O well she knew what time to loose
That warrior from her finger's noose;
O well she knew as soon might fly
The wild bird from the basilisk's eye;
For when she bounded from his breast,
And left him to his own behest,
There, like a thing of death, he stood,
In love's most frantic attitude,
If not all conquered — all subdued.

The arrow's flight is brief and dull,
If stiff the cord, and slight the pull ;
But fleet the way, and far the flight,
If slack the string, and pulled with might ;
The strain that backs it from its prey,
Forms the chief impulse of its way.
Had that young warrior riven the snare
That bound him in his first despair,
Ere now the hills had flung their shade
Betwixt him and the frantic maid
That now gazed on in silent grief ;
For as the javelin, so the chief —
The very strain that kept him back
Had urged him to a speedier track.
But now his soul had lost its spring ;
The bow was straight, and dull the string,
Without one tug of backward might
To give an impulse to his flight ;
But then it was his deepest prayer
To be — no matter where but there —
Where it was ruin to remain —
Where there were bonds in every tear —
Where wavering heart and whirling brain
Gave note of weakness — madness near ;
Yet, now his passions mocked him so,

He grieved that he was free to go ;
Yea, prayed again with equal will
For some excuse to linger still.

Oh blame him not, that warrior, then —
He only felt as other men ;
And they are worthless of the name
Who had not thought and felt the same ;
Are worthless of the glory given
In woman's love, man's brightest heaven !
Whate'er the heartless stoics boast,
The great of mind must feel the most ;
It is the very want of soul,
That helps the victim to control
His passions, and in sooth to be
All calm, where all is misery ;
A passionless, a breathing clod —
Too lowly for a child of God.
A thing of instinct, whom the glow
Of reason warns not of his wo ;
The workings of the mind within,
Whether for righteousness or sin,
Proves more its deathless origin ;
—They lack of reason's influence less,
Than such an abject passiveness.

But still, howe'er his sufferings stung,
His soul was only half unstrung;
The chiefest ties that held him there,

Were bodings for the fate of her
Abandoned, lest her great despair
Should seek an impious sepulchre;
And by that fearful act create
Dark visions of her soul's estate.

"O THOU, whose arm alone is power,
Sustain her in this harrowing hour;
Prepare her, Heaven, to look beyond

The changes of this world of gloom;
O why should hearts like ours despond,

Or sink beneath its instant doom?

So brief the tortures that destroy —

So vast the prospect of our joy —

Yes, yes — my own, my only love,

There's ONE that marks us from above;

And he'll prepare our bowers of rest;

And when our home is with the blest,

Beyond the bounds of Fate's control —

Among the holy and the free;

For aye commingling soul in soul,

In love's sublimest ecstasy, —

How bright will seem our realm of bliss,

As, looking back, we think of this.
But list, dear girl, and ponder well,
The mind must bow — not — not rebel ;
Let ruin come in every form —
Grief, famine, sickness, battle, storm —
It recks not — we should calmly wait
Heaven's judgments — not anticipate.
The foes that meet in deadliest strife
Attack the cause — but not the life ;
'T is Doom directs the battle-knife —

But he that wars on his own breath,
Acts solely from his own decree,
Unswayed by aught, that such must be,
And as the spirit goes abroad —
Unknown to — unrequired by God,
It justly suffers death ;
Nor shall the gift rejected then,
For ever be restored again."

——" Nor ever cared for. Blissful calm,
That knows no sufferings, — needs no balm ;
I would not ask a happier lot,
Than to be doomed and feel it not."

Now, warrior, nerve thine heart to bear
The test — the whirl, of love's despair.

Not thine the heart to brave the path
Of hopeless woman in her wrath ;
Not thine the spirit to defy
The lovely anguish of her eye.

Her passions will be chained no more ;

Her laboring chest proclaims it now —
It heaves, it sinks, the strife is o'er —

Good Heavens ! the frenzy of that brow !
So wild its mixed expression then —
Wrath, terror, wo, despair, and pain —
Yet beauty reveled through the storm,
Each pang was as a rival charm.
Rushing along from cheek to breast,
The latest aye the loveliest ;
But 'mid that whirl of every ill,
Love stood sublimest — mightiest still.

Lord Nial grasped his courser's mane —
—O could he ride the lightning then !
His lips all quivering, — cheeks all wan —
And heart — Is Desmond's Earl a man ?
Quick — quick — thy purpose melts like frost ;
Another look and all is lost !

“ Now, spirit of my slaughtered sire !

Sustain me at the cast — away —
Thus, then, we——”

“ As you hate me, stay
One instant ; then away, away !”
(That voice was such as chilled his blood —
Stopped his heart’s motion, and he stood)——
“Hear but the curse you leave behind,
And then for madness ! — I ’m resigned —
But breathe it, name it, not again,
That harrowing word, my fears require
No second medium to explain
The meaning of those glances dire,
Each flash is as a word of fire,
Impressed upon mine aching brow ;
But Oh ! what boots it to complain —
Nor time nor hope can stay the pain —
Pulse, sinew, heart, and breast and brain
Must ever, ever burn as now ;
But I have known it — long have known,
Whate’er my hope, ’twas this my fear,
That I was in the world alone —
That Nial’s heart was colder grown —
That life nor love could more atone,
To keep it lingering here.
Go — go — deceiver, as thou art,
The veil ’s removed — I see thy heart
Is pining — struggling to depart,
That mine ’s no longer dear ;

Now nothing but a blasted token
Of what it was — wilt hear it spoken ?
Deceived — degraded — would 't were broken !”

“ For Heaven's sake, Mary ! speak not so,
Or I am ruined !”

“ No, love, no !

It falls alone — alone on me,
This undecaying misery !
My only joy, it harms not thee.
O Nial, what hast thou to fear ?
I — I alone must live — must bear,
Yea, fondly — madly — nurse the fever,
That undecayed shall burn for ever.”

“ You speak a riddle.”

“ So, to thee,
My secret must for ever be.
The torments of your fancied hell
Are mine — ay, doubly — if I tell.
Things charged with extra being know,
An extra zest in wail or wo ;
Such pangs as rack the struggling eel,

Not even the lion flayed can feel ;
Then Oh ! how full the curse, and rife,
To one whose every part is life,
Whose feelings and whose love the same,
Is all a spirit — all a flame ;
Yet punishment, nor crime alone,
Forbids to make that mystery known ;
Each different change of hell's excess,
Would tend to make my miseries less.
The suffering limb would take its part
Of suffering, from the tortured heart ;
And every sinew serve to bear
Some portion of my soul's despair ;
But he who gives that tale an ear
Must perish when he 'll cease to hear.
But hadst thou loved as I have loved,
Ere this the barrier were removed ;
So true a passion must have seen
Some way to pierce the mystic screen ;
A thousand times I've signed the way
To where our home of glory lay,
By word or gesture — all in vain ;
You saw not, or you mocked my pain,
Or feared the plunge — there, there again !
One other word as boldly said,

And I were ruined, thou wert dead ;
So, come what may, despair or bliss,
Love cannot prompt to more than this."

Distracted — lost, that warrior gazed,
Or was she what she said, or crazed ?
The seraph lightness of her form,
The awful beauties which that storm
Of passion, hurried o'er her brow,
Then shadowy, like the pale moon now ;
And the wild glory of her eye,
Seemed all like things that never die.
But if immortal, did she dwell
Among the ranks that erred and fell ?
Ah ! no ; her every glance, that even,
Bespoke her of the purest heaven ;
And every impious word laid bare,
At worst a seraph in despair.
Whate'er she was, that form of bloom,
The child of glory, or of doom,
Or nothing but a frantic maid,
Betrayed — (nay, ruined — not betrayed,)
He knew not, nor he cared to know ;
She was his own — his all below,
And if in heaven denied her love,

Dark hope had Nial from above ;
But if — no matter where 't was shared,
His soul was for the worst prepared.

Even such is love, in every form,
The very nursling of the storm,
That pines away in hour of bloom,
But revels in Misfortune's womb,
Still shunning the contented breast ;
O what has Love to do with rest ?
Still clinging to the heart of wo,
The only good that fails to go.
Who never weep, can never know
The mystic monarch, in his glow
Of pride and strength — on pleasure he
Shall surfeit to satiety,
While chain and torture — battle — blight,
Are whetstones to his appetite ;
But 't is when every hope is freed,
He triumphs in his pride indeed.
When Nial thought that Heaven was kind,
He could have left that girl behind ;
But when his soul grew sad with fear,
Even when he deemed perdition near,
What could he do but stay to cheer ?

“ Brief time ago, and then I deemed —
Thou wert all blessed as thou seemed —
And then I loved thee all too well
For words to fathom — tongue to tell ;
But still, the hope that guides the free,
Divided half my soul with thee.
But now, that something in thy fate
Awakens thoughts more desolate,
That love is deeper, wilder grown,
Condensed, concentrated, burning, lone —
Heart, soul, hope, passions — all thine own —
If I can bear the miseries now,
Of cause betrayed, and broken vow,
All future ills may do their worst,
They cannot make me more accurst —
And yet with thee, whate’er thou art,
Thou first, best idol of my heart,
Where e’er thy home — whate’er the test,
Still love me, and I must be blest ;
I deem thee hopeless : if ’t is true,
Whate’er the terrors that ensue,
Thou shalt not be forsaken too.”

And now upon that lone shore kneeling;
With outstretched hands, to Heaven appealing,

He swore —

“By yon bright orb, that flings
Her glory round us! — by the wreath
Worn on the helm of Tara's kings!

By every loss in life or death,
We part!”

No more he would have said,
But ere the word could leave his lips,

A vapor of the stormiest red
Came o'er the moon like an eclipse,
While instantly a wailing blast
Rushed through the heavens, and instant passed.

* * * * *

Oh! what is man, in all his pride?

The pennon fluttering in the gale,
That whirls around from side to side,
Though riding o'er a tranquil tide,

Is scarce so light or frail;
And what the word of his despair?

How shall the minstrel sing?
A bubble, loosened on the air,
That floating through the calmest ray,
Strikes on a beam and melts away,

Is just as staunch a thing,
He loves — Oh, with what truth he loves!

Kneels — worships — in her view ;
But lo ! another impulse moves,
And then, dear girl, adieu."

Had but one briefest instant flown,
Ere howled that envious storm-fiend by ;
Then, Mary, he was all thine own,
—'T were perjury to fly.

But something in that sound of pain
Uproused his slumbering soul again,
And hate once more, with instant spring,
Soared on his hope's most wayward wing ;
He shrinks aghast — the struggle 's past —
Even Love to Vengeance bows at last.

" What voice was that — list, Mary, list !
It called Lord Nial — O I see
My father's form in yonder mist ;
And he is beckoning me !
Father ! I come — my Mary dear,
Fate — Heaven, ordains that we should part ;
And I must leave thee, loved one, here,
All madly worshipped as thou art ;
But if there 's mercy in the sky,
And memory left with those that die,

Where e'er thy spirit's home may be,
I'll come to thee, — I'll come to thee!"

Away! and springing from the ground,
He backed his steed with one bold bound —
Away! and fleet as falcon's spring,
When impelled by wind and wing,
He darted from his Mary's view;
And as along the shore he fled,
He tore the helmet from his head,
And waved, perchance, his last adieu;
For distance, and the shades of night
Obscured him soon from Mary's sight.
But still she gazed along the shore,
And fancied what she saw before —
Gazed with that senseless, stony stare,
That more than speech betrays despair.
She did not weep — no tear, 't is true,
Bedimmed those eyes of heavenliest blue,
But that deep, silent, heartfelt wo
Which dries the source whence tear-drops flow,
Was hers — that wo which breaks the heart,
And will not without being part.
Now on her bosom drooped her head
Exhausted, and she sunk — as dead.

Canto Third.



Canto Third.

THE midnight moon shone cold and bright,
Along that rugged glen ;
Revealing by her silver light,
In many an anxious group that night,
Five hundred warrior men.
They did not wake the beacon's ray —
No watch-fire strewed the ground ;
For many a thousand foemen lay
On every side around.
You could not look and fail to learn
They were not of the lowly kerne,
For theirs that lordliness of tread
Which ill would suit the lowly shed ;
That half repulsiveness of eye,
Which tells of pride for lineage high ;

And that cold dignity of wo,
The peasant bred but seldom show.
In sooth there 's not a warrior there,
But seems a chieftain by his air ;
As one who, with his single sword,
Might keep the pass against a horde.
Nor tells their seeming more than sooth ;
For as they looked, they were in truth,
All high-born men, left desolate,
Doomed, ruined — but deriding fate ;
Whose stubborn souls the tempest braved,
While others bent, and so were saved ;
Whose kindred sorrows — kindred pride,
Have forced them here from every side,
One only beacon for their guide ;
A full redemption from their doom,
Or by the sword, or by the tomb.
No terms they sought — they deemed, and well,
The wretch that pines in dungeon cell,
Less abject in his slavery,
Than he that lives by sufferance free.
“ What ! bow to numbers — bow to gold !
Here, standing on our parent mould —
While every step we plant on earth
Gives some new hope, new vigor birth ?

No ! if we ever stoop to crime,
It must be in a stranger clime !
Come on, or death, or dungeon hold,
The cause is better lost, than sold.
Mavourneen Erin ! sunk, and riven —
To us thou still art all a heaven ;
And if we may not see thee blest,
We 'll sink into thine arms for rest,
Nor bring pollution to thy breast.
Who sees thee fall, nor strives to save,
Is worthless of so green a grave ;
O never may his servile clod
Be mingled with its parent sod —
Be raised from death to meet its God.

Such on a day were Irishmen ;
But let us pause and look again —
Gramercy ! for the march of crime !
Such are they not in after time.

A distant hoof — the rider well
Must know the secrets of the dell,
Else through the gap of wild Dunloe,
He had not urged his courser so :
“ Stand by the guard ! your weapons bare —

He breasts the outpost——”

“Who comes there?”

No stranger’s voice — “A friend” replies.

“The watchword?”

“Vengeance!”

On he hies——

He mounts the rock — he winds the clue —
Dashes the barrier-torrent through——
Lord Nial stands before their view.

“Our noble chief! we feared thy stay —
The foeman lurks along the way.”

“I know it — thrice they crossed my flight,
But thrice they rued my charger’s might;
I scarce required my sabre’s aid,
And yet there’s blood upon the blade.”

Another hoof — “A friend” — “What — ho!
“Fingal, with tidings from the foe.”

" Among the rocks on Glenna's brow
The hireling herd are sheltered now ;
From every gap a bristling spear
Rose through the moonlight, tall and clear."

" 'T is well — and yet 't were better still
Descend the vale, than mount the hill ;
Better to rush with headlong sweep,
Than labor up the rugged steep ;
But what are obstacles ? The base
May trace them, as they strive to trace ;
But come they, or in gloom, or wrath,
They never block the soldier's path ;
Nay ! at the issue only serve
To give him pride, and give him nerve ;
Nor mountain height, nor pathless way,
Shall keep our great revenge at bay.
Prepare the feast — we'll bide the night —
Our vengeance is a deed of light ;
How buoyant springs the warrior's tread,
From the gilt heather, bright and red ;
And when the gallant soul is sped,
Where better rests the warrior's head ?
Prone on the soil he died to save,
A golden halo round his grave."

* * * * *

How beautiful in death she lay
Beside that blue lake still;
Her cheek more pale than winter's ray
Upon a snow-clad hill —
And all so free from every stain
That marked her living woes,
I would not have her wake again
From such a bright repose —
But hush ! was that a zephyr's breath
Which stirred those lips of bliss ?
And has that maiden blushed in death
Instinctive at the kiss ?
Ah ! no, that sigh came from her soul,
That blush came from her breast,
The hand of death has brief control
On any thing so blest.

“ So wild a dream ! ” she, waking, said,
“ A warrior captured by a maid ;
Yet, whence this sudden ray
Of rapture, kindling round my heart ?
Lead on, lead on, whoe'er thou art
That urges to this bold design,
And I will bow before thy shrine,

Kneel — honor, — all I may.
A deep revenge for wrongs endured —
Love — all by woman's wit secured,
Away" — and on she passed;
The fallow in her flight of dread,
When first she leaves her mountain shed,
The grim dog near, the plain a-head,
Had scarcely flown so fast.
She won her bower, she crossed the gate,
Some minutes passed, and then
Two horsemen issued forth in state,
And swept along the glen.

* * * * *

Encamped on Glenna's heights they lay,
Ten thousand men, or more —
But O! a servile swarm were they,
Who served for fear, or served for pay,
Such men as lick their despot's rods,
Unfinished creatures, breathing clods —
Who, when a few short years are past,
Shall sink into their lairs at last,
Nor leave a soul to soar.

There skulked the lowly, lynx-eyed Dane,
I knew him by his mood —
His heart was brooding o'er the gain

For which he sold its blood;
And there the baser Norman churl,
That counts nor gain or loss —
But who, if it would please his Earl,
Had danced upon the cross;
And many an Englishman was there,
With ruddy cheek and station fair,
And brow of manly pride.
Ah! why will freemen aid the slave
To hunt the wretched, crush the brave?
It should be theirs the weak to save,
Nor join the stronger side.
But Oh! of all the bloodiest band
That swelled those servile hordes,
Were men — even children of the land,
That bled beneath their swords.
I curse the vagrant Danish clan —
The lowly Norman too —
I curse the recreant Englishman
That leagued with such a crew.
But curses doubly — doubly deep,
For ever be the dower
Of all who on that mountain steep
Were of the land they left to weep,
That weeps this very hour.—

Oh, mercy ! be thy influence lost,
If e'er thou breath'st their names ;
For ever be their spirits tost
Through whirlwinds and through flames ;
Forever branded, lashed, and driven,
Without one hope in view ;
—I would not crave the bliss of heaven,
If traitors share it too.

Within his tent, retired and lone,
The leader sat, of all those hordes ;
Nor were the deeds to fame unknown,
Of bold Mac Art, of swords.
But since a traitor he became,
Lord Lodar was his rank and name.
His foes pronounced that gold allured —
His friends, that 't was for wrongs endured ;
Thus for the sake of pique or pelf,
He doomed his country — damned himself.

“ Whose step is that ? ” The lamp burned low,
He saw not, but he felt, the foe ;
For ere his hand could grasp his blade,
Lord Lodar in the dust was laid.
Two warriors bear him from the floor —

Those warriors I have seen before ;
Their statures low, and figures slight,
Seem little formed for deeds of might ;
They bind that chieftain to a steed,
They mount, — away — and forth they speed.
But scarce a briefest hour was flown,
When one returned, and one alone,
Is it Lord Lodar ? — need I ask ?
He wears the chieftain's plume and casque,
Speaks in his voice, so rough and stern —
Reclines him in his couch of fern —
'T is haply, then, the doubtful glare
His fitful lamp flings round them there,
That makes him seem so slight and low,
To what he seemed an hour ago.

He calls aloud, his slaves appear.
"Command the readiest bugle here —
But first remove or shade the light ;
Though feeble, it affects my sight."
The bugler entered at his will —
"Blow the assembly, loud and shrill."
Old Glenna and the mountains round
Awoke in thunder at the sound,
And all was bustle ; mound and glen

Poured forth their swarms of eager men,
Each seeking for his several troop
By war-cry loud, or signal whoop;
'T is strange, how every soldier tells
His own, amid that whirl of yells —
But such his ear by custom grown,
No sound excites him but his own.
And there was many a mumbled prayer
Of warrior, loath to quit his lair,
And many a " Would that bugler's note
Had choked him ere it left his throat ;"
And there was many a hammer clang ;
And coursers pawed, and corslets rang,
And falchion belt, and haversack
Were buckled upon hip and back,
And thus, secured for peace or fight,
On, on they hurried, left and right.
But soon that tumult wild was past —
Each soldier found his post at last ;
And now, of all that vast array,
There 's not a single spear astray.

* * * * *

Their feast was on the heather spread,
A warrior's homely cheer ;
Potato, cresset, salt, and bread,

And haunch of dun red deer ;
And many a deep and flowing bowl
Of Erin's nectar pure,
To warm the wit, and cheer the soul,
And help it to endure ;
For those who at that rude repast
Now quaffed the generous tide,
Cared little for the midnight blast
That swept the bleak hill's side.
But deem ye not at such a time,
They made its balm the source of crime.
Alone the slave who fears to bear,
Will fly to stupor, from despair ;
Then let the lowly blame in vain
The weepings of the golden grain ;
For one, will I renounce it not,
Because it makes the fool a sot ;
For while it binds the judgment down,
How slight the blame, at worst ;
The gentlest wave will drench or drown,
As well as slake the thirst ;
The brightest gifts that Heaven supplies,
The very beacon of the skies,
Abused, becomes the means of vice.

Alone Lord Nial seems in sorrow —
What! fears he then the coming morrow
Is his the only cheek to pale? —
The only heart to bend and quail?
His warriors seem more free from blight
Than they have been for many a night;
No quagmire ray to cheat the mind,
'T is now all ruined — and resigned!
The latest hope has ceased to soar,
And so despair can vex no more;
For while a shade remains throughout,
It leaves the misery of a doubt.
The wretch that braves the desert sea
Will perish more contentedly
Than he that sinks beneath the wave,
Just as the shallop nears to save.
In vain he strives his soul to cheat,
He smiles — that smile is all deceit;
He may not mingle in the glow
Of rapture, which his comrades know.
That reckless, changeless, blissful state
Of hopelessness, which laughs at fate;
For them the world was all a tomb —
For him, one ray still cheered its gloom.
One rebel ray which mocked at will,

And kept his grief from torpor still.
Such hope as leads the struggling tar,
On ruffian billows borne afar,
To seek the summit of the mast,
And hug his miseries to the last ;
'T was strange whence that lorn hope had birth—
'T was not of fame, or heaven, or rest,
For aye it wooed him back to earth,
Against his soul's behest.
'T was as the voice of things unborn,
That mystic sound we sometimes hear,
When that which is not, sends to warn
Our senses of its coming near.

More tidings from the foe — again,
A horseman thundering through the glen.
Each goblet, sparkling in the air,
Seems for an instant spell-bound there ;
And every eye is anxious bent
Towards the valley's crater vent ;
Now glance the moon-beams from his spear,
Now plume, and crest, and helm appear,
Now shouts the outmost sentinel,
“ A friend,” again, “ pass friend, all's well ;”
Another sweep of breathless speed,

The warrior reins his panting steed ;
But all too late, my noble roan,
Unless to hear thy dying moan ;
“ Why flagged thee not upon the road ?
Thou wert not urged by whip or goad ;
But solely of thine own accord
Hast broke thy heart to serve thy lord ;
But scarcely do I deem it vain,
The hope that we may meet again ;
For many a dame I ’ve known, with less
Of soul than thee, my gallant Bess :
Light be thy sleep among the shade
Of granite cliff, and mountain heather ;
Since fate forbids, my bonny maid,
That we should bleed and rest together.”

A stern old son of strife was he,
Whose sword had many a soul set free ;
Whose eye had marked the friend he loved,
Prone on the dust, and marked unmoved ;
Yet now he shed a tribute tear
Above his stiffening courser’s bier ;
He never lost a friend so dear.
But soon the soldier’s grief is sped —
He turns him from the mighty dead,

"The brave O'Neil — but whence this speed?"

"The lightnings scarce had served my need!

Heaven smiles at length — the foe has left

Its loop-hole in the eagle's cleft.

I tracked it downward, downward still,

Till scarce a straggler pressed the hill,

Bid Hate rejoice, and Hope awake,

No warrior he, who hears with sorrow,

That now along the central lake

The hireling herd await the morrow,

My faithful Bess lies breathless there,

To be the first the news to bear."

Then rose to heaven the deafening shout,

Applauding, heart-sent, deep throughout;

'T was the ungarnished evidence

Of soul; and speech can ne'er convey

Its meaning with such eloquence,

As that unbroken, wild huzza.

"Fill up your grace cups to the brink,

And now to Freedom's God we drink!

To him who guides our swords at last

To such a long desired repast;"

Five hunderd tongues renew the cry,
" To Freedom's God and vengeance nigh !"

" Now part we for an hour of rest,
The sleepless arm aye strikes the best ;
But let the lark's first sonnet be
The summons of our gathering tree ;
And let us don our best array —
Scarf, belt, and star, and plume so gay,
And rush into themorrow's fray
As if it were our bridal day !"

END OF CANTO THIRD.



Canto Fourth.



Canto Fourth.

THY banks, sweet Mucross ! well become
The onset of the bright and brave,
And well the warrior's crest and plume
Are mirrored in thy wave ;
And thou art meet for love, as war,
For woman's sigh, as sabre scar.
Speak as we may of peaceful life,
Of human weal, and human will —
Most deeply dwell the seeds of strife
Within the noblest bosoms still ;
And never breathed the lady bright,
Howe'er her looks the charge belie,
Who would not wish her love a knight,
And glory in his battle cry.
How bounds the maiden's heart to see

Her bright locks crown his glancing crest,
And ere he mounts his charger free,

To languish on her warrior's breast.

Love may be found in peaceful bowers,
Where all is sunshine, smiles, and flowers —
May loll at ease the livelong day,
Where rose-beds bloom and streamlets stray,
In one bright round of changeless bliss;
But soon he tires of scenes like this,
And sighs for action — that pure sense,
The more opposed, the more intense
Becomes its being — strife, commotion,
But serve to deepen its devotion.

The bard may win a tribute tear —

The wealthy fool at times will move —
But he alone that wields the spear,
Can teach a maiden's heart to love.

But think ye not I thus resign
Of all heaven's gifts the most divine,
The light of woman! — no, by Jove! —

If song the ties of love could sever,
I'd leave my laurel, harp, and grove,
And fight for woman's smile for ever.

'T is less than morn, yet more than night,

The sky, before so darkly bright,
Assumes a sicklier aspect, and
Wanes lighter, but less brightly grand,
Than when along the deep dark blue,
The isles of heaven came streaming through.
Still o'er the lake the moonbeams dance,
But night no more their charms enhance
By contrast — paler wears the hour,
But Cynthia yet asserts her power ;
And still essays her rays to fling
Rebellious to her sovereign king.
But Oh ! how vain the contest ! soon
The powerless and ill-fated moon,
With many a fair retainer nigh,
Hangs undistinguished in the sky.

'The sun is up — the lord of morn !
And comes the sense from whence it may,
I never gazed upon his horn
But something seemed to bid me pray ;
Oh ! how unlike the gloomy earth,
From which the sordid heart has birth —
—The nobler spirit springs in scorn—
The frame still pines to rest and lie,
The soul to soar beyond the sky,

Each true to nature, bright, or base,
Still seeking some congenial place ;
Oh, well I deem, when cold at last,
—The mystic dance of being past ;
The mind shall mount on pinions free,
And as the clod, when life is done,
Gives dust to dust, so it shall be
A portion of the living sun !

An hundred tents are on the shore, —
Ten thousand men of war, or more —
Some slumbering on the gilded plain,
That soon shall sleep, nor wake again;
While others wipe the morning dew
From cap and spur, and falchion true ;
And many a group at random strayed,
By lake and river, fair to see,
Or lolled beneath the fragrant shade
Of sorbos and arbutos tree.

The leader's tent was by the wave,
Such the command Lord Lodar gave
Nor was it guarded all too well ;
Alone, one light armed sentinel,
Behind the breezy chamber stood —

The front was bounded by the flood.
A foot approached (his eye was bent),
A chieftain neared the sacred tent —
The soldier knew him at a glance,
And faced his post, and lowered his lance;
The warrior slowly bent his head —
A chieftain's thanks for homage paid.

"I seek the Earl."

"As yet, Sir Knight,
He has not seen the morning light."

"What! not gone forth at all, today?
He rarely sleeps the night away;
And now the sun seems two hours old,
Nor is the morning damp or cold —
Sir Page, within there, ho!"

"Hilloh!"

"Why lags my lord?"

"Heaven knows! for me —
He left his couch three hours ago."

“How now, sir!”

“By the holy Three!

Since I was posted on this spot,
Or man, or mortal past me not;
And save he took the water's side,
My lord's within,—”

“Else thou hast lied!

A bugler there, alarm the host!”
Quick flew the word from post to post;
To none he came, by none he crossed;
“By all that's curst, the chieftain's lost! —
Perchance in sacred nook laid low
By coward stab, from lurking foe.
A thousand tongues at once speak out —
If living, he had heard that shout —
Search furze and hollow, brake and tree —
Search wheresoe'er a man might be —
Ha! who descends from yonder height?
A warrior, by his corslet bright —
By all the saints to whom we pray,
The Earl himself — huzza! huzza!”

So spoke Sir Percy Hildebrand,

The second chieftain in command;
And one who to be first had given
The little claim he held on heaven.
Whate'er he said of secret blow,
Was just because he willed it so;
In the first whirl of new-born hope,
He gave the lurking venom scope;
For all that stormy burst of wo,
Lips pale and trembling, starting eyes,
Was only triumph in disguise.
Meanwhile the chieftain drew more near —

“What demon drove the forces here?”

“My lord, no demon could have driven
The favored of the Pope and Heaven;
No arm but Lodar's could have led —”

“Sir Percy!”

“Sir?”

“The riddle's read,

“Your slaves but ill performed their task.”

“My Lord, what slaves?”

“Does Percy ask?”

The ruffian stabbers whom you sent
To beard your chieftain in his tent ;
By heavens ! you act it wondrous well,
So guiltless — yet as black as hell !
What ! dare you bandy looks ? beware —
Here stands a tree — a traitor there ;
But to my tale, and mark it well !
The blow was heavy, and I fell ;
They bound me, as they thought, a corse —
They flung me, sack-like, on a horse.
The motion roused me by the way,
Still, like a sack, perforce I lay ;
Yet much I marvelled at the things
That kept me in my leading strings ;
So young, so slight — I deemed it hard
To be the charge of such a guard ;
For hale, and free, as now I stand,
Without a sapling in my hand,
Not fifty such, should all assist,
Could tie a ribbon to my wrist.
The one was headlong, silent, wild —
The other chatted, jeered, and smiled —
And seemed, for all his ruffian trade,
As merry as a lady's maid ;
Nor did the semblance finish there,

So slight his fingers, and so fair;
And once, as I essayed to speak,
His nails were grappled in my cheek.
And then they pitched me to the ground,
And round a stump my fetters wound;
And then the tallest of the pair,
Unbraced my helm, and left me bare.
At length my strength was all restored;
With sudden wrench I snapped the cord,
I sought the camp — the hill was clear —
Your foot-marks led, and I am here!
And whatsoever the intent might be,
The cause, Sir Percy, came from thee!"

Then up Lord Lodar's suite arose —
Sir Percy's friends their arms oppose —
High pealed the war-trump, deep and wide,
The rival chiefs, their powers divide,
Five thousand strong on either side.
Each line was formed from left to right
As level as an arrow's flight —
"Make ready," and each falchion bright
Flashed upwards like a line of light;
And every lance was in its rest,
All bristling onward, breast to breast,

From either side the onset rose,
Away ! and with a rush they close,
And many a brand a scabbard found —
And many a trunk lay piled around ;
And shrieks, and wailings rose in air,
The dying in their last despair,
No pride of cause sustained them there ;
And those who fought, felt not the glow
That warms us to the deadlier foe ;
They knew how light the glory gained
From brand in friendly bosom stained ;
But still their hearts grew black with hate —
And still they urged the shafts of fate,
With such a headlong scorn of life,
As would have graced a nobler strife.
No private will had they to serve,
They were their lords', hand heart and nerve,
Their battle cries, — Lord Lodar's hight,
“ *Let none advance that fear the fight* ” —
Sir Percy's — “ ON, AND ONWARD STILL ”
To them, was fate, and hope, and will.
And as the windless swell of ocean,
Rolling with revolving motion,
When every gust that tore its crest
Has shrunk into its cave of rest ;

So moved that ring of fighting men,
In one close mass of conflict then :
Now here, now there, from side to side,
Revolving like the restless tide ;
Each host in turn strains on a-main —
Or from the centre backs again —
For though, since first they clashed in strife
A thousand men had passed from life,
In equal share from either host,
A vantage foot could neither boast.

Oh ! where is Nial ? where his band ?

Speed Freedom ! — Vengeance speed the free !
Now is the time a single brand

Might make an offering worthy thee —
When mighty villains strive for sway,
They each become the easier prey,
And is it not a deed of grace
To take advantage of the base ?
They come ! I hear their war-drums beat,
Far, far, and indistinct, and sweet ;
They steal not through the night along,
But come in sunlight and in song :
'T is now more palpable and near —

No clarion blast or trumpet bray,

But their own voices, bold and clear,
Joined in a gladsome roundelay.

“O! how the hireling whining,
His golden bonds entwining,
May envy us,
Advancing thus,
To rest, without repining.”

The fight was in its fullest tide,
A boiling whirl of carnage wide;
And in the very vortex stood
Lord Lodar at his work of blood;
And as his weapon rose and fell,
'T was seen that he performed it well;
For every time it flashed on high,
The blade seemed of a bloodier dye.
'T was now upon its sweep of ire,
As fleet and fell as shaft of fire;
When, quick as thought, he stopped its course,
And turned him on his plunging horse;
“Hark! heard ye not their war-whoop then! —
Tush! 't was some vapor of the brain;
They durst not come, that rebel train,
To beard me on the open plain;
— By Haco's head! that shout again.”

And as he said, that war-song high,
In one wild shout broke through the sky;
Nor hill, nor wood, its tones suppressed,
But on it came, deep, broad, and blest;
Five hundred tongues the notes prolong,
And heart and soul were in the song;
For as it rose, so rich the sound,
The wildest of the echoes round
Tried every art, but tried in vain,
To raise her voice above that strain.

“The lowly traitors near us,
That tremble while they hear us,
 When they have seen
 Our banners green,
Shall envy as they fear us.
Stream on, ye birds of beauty!
Our only guides to duty;
 For save’t is wrung
 Your staves among,
We seek not fame nor booty.”

Those words fell sad on Lodar’s soul,
He strove, but could not all control
The rush of conscience, wakened now,
Which burned one instant o’er his brow.

"Speed, Fergus, to Sir Percy — speed!
No other course will serve our need;
Lest in the whirlwind of his wrath,
He joins the rebel in his path;
Tell him, in Henry's name, no more
On friendly hearts our hate we 'll pour,
But settle, on some future day,
The justice of our broil — away!"

Then Fergus sheathed his smoking knife,
And sped unharmed amidst the strife.
Sir Percy heard him when he came,
And bowed him to king Henry's name;
And much of joy his eye expressed,
His arm from civil broil to rest;
For little faith that hour had he
Upon his chieftain's fealty;
For he that once rejects his creed
Will turn again in case of need.
And now is Lodar's Earl again
The only leader on the plain;
And now it is as truly seen,
The human crowd 's a mere machine,
Worked by some crafty engineer,
Who as he wills may drive or steer;
A thing to toil, and sweat, and groan,

Without one motive of its own.
But hold ! Sir Percy gives the word
 To form upon the senior line ;
And fifty chieftains' tongues are heard,
 And columns move by word or sign.
 " Left shoulders, forward — right incline,"
And hark ! the pivot captain's shout,
 " Out markers, by the centre out" —
Forth speed the markers — wheel about,
 And cover in a row ;
And now the points are all prepared,
They wait but for the signal word.—
It comes at length, like bugle bray,
 "Forth, double by the left — away !"
 And on, and on they go.

Meanwhile a line of banners green,
Among the mountain rocks are seen ;
And now five hundred plumes of white,
As stainless as the flakes of night,
That lie on Turk's untrodden height,
 Come winding down the glen ;
And now the rocks are on the right,
And now, by all that 's blest and bright !
I never saw so fair a sight,
 As that five hundred men.

Their brands and helms are gilded brass,
Of flaming steel each broad cuirass,
And arm, and thigh, are hedged in steel,
And some have golden spur on heel,
And all have scarfs of brightest sheen,
The gift of brighter maids, I ween,
 Around their shoulders hung ;
And O ! the dame may well be proud,
Whose warrior rides in that bright crowd ;
For every glowing cheek is bare,
And all are fair, or once were fair,
For Time has left his traces there ;

 The few alone are young :

But, though he touched their locks with gray,
Though on their cheeks his furrows lay,
Their hearts, too proud to brook decay,
Have laughed the tyrant's wrath away ;

 And as they stand this hour,
Each glowing brow, and flashing eye,
The types of things that never die,
Portray unshaken energy,

 And undiminished power.

But thou, Lord Nial ! thou alone,
A god amidst immortals shone,
A blaze of light from heel to plume,

A cheek of beauty, youth, and bloom ;
And such a form, and such an eye,
If there 's a maid in yonder sky
 Unmated at this hour,
She well may wish thy ransom nigh,
 To woo thee to her bower ;
But O ! if Memory holds her ties,
 When souls are riven in twain,
The brightest girl in paradise
 May woo, but woo in vain.

O ! thou dear Muse, that rules tonight,
 Assist me as I soar ;
Call every unborn gush to light,
And bid the tints be bold and bright,
Even though so wild a whirl of strife
Should so unsap my trunk of life,
 That I might sing no more.
Lord Nial was the first to see
 That bloody plain below,
The first to shout, " God speeds the free,"
 And thunder on the foe.
On ! on they rushed, that noble band,
A falchion sheath in each right hand,
Which, as they neared the line at length,

They forward flung with headlong strength,
And followed with a yell.
Their scabbards so confused the van,
That scarce a blow was given by man,
Till thrice two hundred fell.
Oh! Heaven — the shout, the shock of war,
As breast to breast they met!
The roar of vengeance, wilder far —
—Of fear, even wilder yet! —
Up, up! my soul, for O! thou art
A scion of the free,
And triumph o'er each hireling heart
That bleeds along the lea.
But ill that miscellaneous band,
The ruffian scum of many a land,
Could bide the onset, brand to brand;
For by the length in which they lay,
A part was only brought in play,
Which, panic-struck, gave instant way,
While through the rent, with wild huzza,
Lord Nial's squadrons flew;
Then wheeled their chargers in the rear —
Leant o'er their necks with crouchant spear,
And back again, though now the ranks
Were trebled from the outward flanks,

They hacked their red way through,
In vain the deadly rock was slung —
In vain a thousand javelins rung —
And dart on dart went whistling by;
Still rose the outlaws' battle-cry,
Still flashed their reeking brands on high,
Like crimson meteors through the sky;
And still, of all their train,
Though death looked out from many an eye,
Though many a vein was parched and dry,
Not one had pressed the plain;
For will supplied the lack of nerve,
And hate sustained them still;
They could not from the battle swerve,
While hope conduced a thrill;
For even the latest blow might serve
A traitor's life to spill.
But now Sir Percy, furious grown,
Gave metal to his panting roan,
And rushed to the attack;
Five hundred troopers, stout and young,
With many a gentle Knight among,
Came bounding at his back;
They met; as flood and flame they met,
So rose the steam from sabres wet,

From hissing vein below ;
For ere had ceased their onset shout,
Brand, helm, and plume were strewn about,
And many a cheek, and bosom fair,
Lay resting, all so tranquil there,
To feast the carrion crow.
But still the odds are with the brave —
Still high their emerald streamers wave —
Even those who to the death recline,
Still fix their sight on that blest sign,
And proudly swell the cry,
“ Erin for ever !” name divine !
Then feebly sigh, “ Heaven’s peace be thine !”
And on the blessing die.

Sir Percy fain would prove a spear
With Nial, in his first career ;
But when he caught the hero’s glance,
His own was instant turned askance ;
He could not brook the scornful ire,
Which pierced him in that glance of fire,
And yet ’t was more of conscience far
Than fear, withheld him from the war ;
He shrunk not that Lord Nial’s arm
Flung death about, as by a charm —

Nor feared he, though in breast or limb,
He was not formed to strive with him ;
But such the halo Freedom threw
 Around her votary in that hour,
That Percy shrunk before his view,
 And faded in his power ;
He felt himself a lowly thing,
His hope grew dim, his pride took wing,
 He turned, and would have fled —
But Nial's halbert left its rest,
And forced its way through back and breast —
The chieftain sighed, " And is it so !
To die like slave by backward blow ?"
Then bending to his saddle low,
 His drooping spirit fled.

His warriors, when their leader fell,
 Amazed, distressed, and heartless stood,
Gazing where he that loved them well
 Lay weltering in the purple flood ;
But soon their sorrow, fear, or scorn
'Mid the wild din of strife was borne ;
For now the ranks were all engaged,
On every side the conflict raged ;
And either wing was inward bent,

Directed to a central vent,
And every bow, and brand, at length
On one great focus poured its strength,
And Nial, and his martyr band,
Were inward pent on every hand,
While that grim ring with fearful skill,
Moved onward, inward, closing still.
But long shall vengeance bless the day,
That gallant host was driven to bay,
For haply else it would have fell,
Nor left so red a tale to tell ;
The more compressed the mountain's fire,
The more it triumphs in its ire,
So maddened, the concentrated few,
More than the many spread, can do ;
For as in poesy, in war,
Strength, well condensed, grows stronger far,

Still rolls along the tide of strife,
When none or grant, or seek for life ;
When mind and blood are in the glow,
That fear, nor feel, nor spare the blow ;
For all so wrapt the heart and brain,
In the dear human hope to kill,

That many a man has pressed that plain,
Whose arm is up, defying still.

Out ! out, my soul upon my song,
And mingle in that bloody throng ;
I see the soldiers strike, and trust —
I see the wounded bite the dust —
And panting steeds, and panting men
Advance, and wheel, and charge again,
And hurry, hurry, to and fro,
Up and down their falchions go —
Banners sink, and banners soar,
Sink again, and rise no more —
Soldiers grapple, strive, and bend —
Shrieks and battle-shouts ascend.
“ The brave may fall, but never yield ” —
“ Thus forward to the stars afield.”
“ Milesian,” “ On, and onward still,”
“ St. Patrick” and “ St. Collomb Kill.”
And many a saint of name as fair,
Whose lives were spent in peace and prayer,
Were called on, in that whirl of strife,
To aid them in the waste of life.
The ravens gather to the slaughter,
Blood is flowing, free as water,

Hand to hand, and foot to foot,
Left and right, they still dispute
The palm of victory — fate impending,
Hangs on every blade descending,
Every banner stave is bloody
—Axe and sabre hacked and ruddy;
Every steed is faint and blowing,
Cheek and bosom flushed and glowing;
While the soul of Freedom sickens,
As the roar of carnage thickens,
To see how fast — Oh! sight appalling —
The noblest of her sons are falling.

But still Lord Nial hacked his way,
Still kept an hundred brands in play;
Both helm and shield received like wax
The impress of his battle-axe;
Still round him closed the hostile ring,
Though thinned at every fatal swing,
While onward, onward still he pressed,
Bloody and gored from boot to crest,
'Mid the surrounding swords that fall,
Him single, but a match for all.

Lord Lodar marked him from afar :

“ Now, by the head of Starchetar,

'T were pity that a soul so brave
Were sped by falchion of a slave."
And on he thundered, "Slaves, for shame! —
Lord Nial, in King Henry's name,
I offer pardon."

"This to me?

I thank thee for the courtesy;
Would Heaven thy king was near me too,
He should not lack the tribute due!"

"Enough for friendship — be it so!
King Henry's is Lord Lodar's foe."

"Which makes thee, at the mildest view,
Sir Chieftain, but a traitor true.
Would Heaven thou wert as good, as brave,
To be more worthy of my glave."

They met — Oh! for a word of flame,
To give that clash a better name;
A word, through which the sound might flow,
In keeping with my spirit's glow.
As when two stars (when either force
The other from its destined course)

Sweep through the heavens with headlong haste,
Till in the midst they stand embraced;
So met those chieftains, swift as fate,
Forced inwards by a central hate:
And as two practiced hammers go,
On the shrill anvil, blow for blow,
So clash their weapons, fast and fell,
So rings again their echoes' swell;
Their battered beavers long shall tell
How fierce their blows, and aimed how well:
They rest — they tug — they feign their blows,
Again they part — again they close;
The startled blood-bird leaves his prey,
To gaze upon that fearful fray,
And marks their ruddy blades with glee;
Even hate suspends her toil, to see
The mighty strife, and all is still,
Save the wild echoes of the hill.

'T is finished — to its proudest height;
Lord Nial raised his form of might,
His war-trained steed stood half erect,
To give the blow the more effect;
And up his ponderous weapon went,
To gather strength for its descent —

Th' exhausted foeman marked it well,
And felt 't would slay him as it fell :
Was it the consciousness of sin —
The throb of guilty fear within,
That made him tremble, as he gazed
On the red reeking terror, raised
To crush him ? — from his quivering lips

Escaped a deep repentant sigh ;
Then, then, he felt the scorpion whips
Of Conscience, and he feared to die.

The axe was in its earthward bent ;
Through crest and helm crash, crash ! it went,
And clove the skull so fair in two,
Each side seemed equal size to view,
As bloody, horrible, and bare,
They lay upon his shoulders there !
He shook and fell — I durst not say
God speed the traitor on his way.
If mercy may be sought and found,
Betwixt the stirrup and the ground,
Haply the prayer was not in vain
He died repeating, but the stain
Of thraldom, wedded to his name,
Forever damns Lord Lodar's fame.

* * * * *

Along the banks, ten thousand men
That morn arose to view,
All anxious, proud, and buoyant then,
And that fair lake was blue.
The evening came — and where were they ?
Ask him who keeps the dead !
Seven thousand souls had passed away,
And that fair lake was red.
Oh ! well had Discord woven her toil, —
Well stirred the flame of civil broil ;
Else had that band of martyrs past,
Nor won such glorious graves at last.
What could they do with such an host ?
One rush — one shout — and all was lost ;
For twenty swords with instant bound,
A home in every heart had found ;
But so confused the line had been,
When first came on the banners green,
That full six thousand lives had flown,
Before five hundred brands alone.
But Death, unsated with his prize,
Still claims a nobler sacrifice ;
There 's scarce a warrior still unblest,
Who bears a trefoil on his crest,
Though here and there, alone and rare,

An emerald pennon might be kened,
Now soaring proudly in the air —

Now sinking with a struggling bend —
Till many a powerful effort past,
O'erwhelmed and rent, it falls at last.

And now, alas ! the brave are gone
Into the dark grave, one by one ;
Left life, and hope, and promise fair,
For, freedom, and a bloody lair !

But what is death to those who die
'Mid stroke, and flash, and battle-cry ?
When all so wrapt in pride, and hate,

Fame — vengeance — war-cry — sabre clang,
The soul goes bounding to its fate,

Before the heart has felt a pang.
Let him that loves a long decay,
Feed death by grains from day to day,
On cankered heart and sunken breast,
In which the soul is all at rest ;
Still let him linger, pine and cling,
A poor neglected, trembling thing ;
Who, when he goes at length, shall leave
No eye to weep — no heart to grieve ;
For as his life and death have been
Too mixed to draw a line between,

So, living, he claimed every tear
That should have graced the dead man's bier,
But if to me the choice were given
(Still bending to the will of Heaven),
Ere wasting plague, or fever grim,
Had sunk a tooth in heart or limb,
While hope was on its summer wing,
I 'd pass from nature with a spring.

The victim of a thousand glaves,
Lord Nial powerless drooped at length,
Surrounded by a pile of slaves,

That fell beneath his arm of strength ;
When hark ! that deep desponding shriek !
The blood remounted in his cheek,
And life returning, flashed again
From his dark eye, as o'er the plain
He gazed — Oh ! must he gaze in vain ?
A band of desperate fiends, or men !

(So dark their looks of horror fell
On all around, 't were hard to ken

If they belonged to earth or hell),
Came rushing past him in pursuit
Of a lorn maid, who wildly fled,
The eye of every reeking brute

Flashed lightning, and each arm of dread

Upheld a ruddy sword;

And as the shrieking victim passed,

One wild — one lingering look she cast

Upon Lord Nial — Saints of rest!

Sustain the warrior at the test,

Lest in his wrath he should presume

To kick against the smiter's doom;

———'T was Mary's self implored.

And on she went — and now that blow

Has cleft her brow of beauty — no!

Some pitying angel's viewless hand

Has saved her from that reeking brand;

But still they followed — still she flew —

No friendly sword — no hope in view —

On either side the way was steep —

Before her smiled the glittering deep;

Where shall she turn her? shall she crave

The life she scorns? Oh! never, while

There's safety in that sacred wave,

Can she solicit boon so vile.

Boldly she plunged, far, far and deep,

The goal is won — the chase is o'er —

Bright be the visions of her sleep,
Or may she dream no more.

No lyre shall breathe, no pencil trace
The anguish of that chieftain's face,
As in the strength of his despair
He rose, all bleeding, from his lair ;
An age of pain he'd bear, to be
One instant from his weakness free ;
And forth he staggered towards the flood,
Where still those gory monsters stood.
" Demons ! " he cried, " for such I deem

You are, for men ne'er looked as ye —
Am I the victim of a dream ?

Or is this all reality ? "
They turned, and soon that hapless chief
Had found due solace for his grief ;
When instant every sword was staid,
And every cheek was blanched with dread ;
For on the sleeping flood was seen
A warrior, and his banner green ;
Lord Nial bowed, for well he knew
The standard of O'Donohoe !
He had not come alone to save
The hero from the hireling grave ;
For prancing steed, and pageant gay,

Proclaimed the cause — **THE FIRST OF MAY!**
And O! the thousand forms of light,
That swam before the warrior's sight!
And though his eye was glazed and dim,
He saw that all looked kind on him;
And then a minstrel caught his gaze —
I blush to sing that minstrel's praise;
But he had stood rebuke severe
In service of his mistress dear;
And light he recked of threatened pain,
If he might see her smile again;
But more than all, I blush to say,
How well that minstrel woke the lay;
Wrapt Echo caught his wondrous strain,
And sang it to herself again;
And then he glanced around and smiled,
 Elated at the powers of song,
And finishing his prelude wild,
 He poured its soul along:

SONG.

“ We, from lands beneath the sea,
 Have hither soared on fleetest pinions;

Mortal ! wilt thou go with me ?

I 'll lead thee to our bright dominions.

“ If there was charm in Mary's eye,

O ! leave the world a lasting token ;

Or dost thou fear with her to die ?

Or is the bond of beauty broken ?

“ 'T is sweet to see, as life departs

On lingering wing, — it knows not whither —

The unity of two fond hearts,

To cleave through endless hours together.

“ O, would'st thou sleep beside a slave

Of ruffian race, and heart imbruted ?

And shall the flowers of Nial's grave

By foot of satrap be polluted ?

“ Not while this sacred flood can save

From such pollution — never, never !

Then haste, O ! haste beneath the wave,

And clasp the form you loved forever.”

The breathing wires were hushed at last,

Bard — prince, and pageant — all were past ;

A voice was heard upon the shore,
"To thee, sweet love, for evermore,"
And then a splash — and all was o'er;
And long the ripple marked the wave
That rolled above Lord Nial's grave.

* * * * *

My hand is still upon the string,
Still fears the muse to rest her wing,
—Hope sickens, as the end draws near;
And Doubt stands whispering while I sing —
Perchance the world will scorn to hear.
And yet, as I forbear to sue
For gold, to mingle with my bays,
And am a nameless stranger too,
'T were cruel to withhold its praise.
But who shall honor or reward
The efforts of a nameless bard?
In vain he toils, and pines, and craves —
The name alone or sinks or saves!
But let it go — I've felt the glow
Which none but lovers — poets, know;
That maddening thrill of bliss, which springs
Within him, as he sues or sings;
Which well repays a child of song
For after hours of doubt and wrong.

For man alone the rod 's designed;
Dear woman still is ever kind;
The lover's soul — the poet's trust,
Too good — too heavenly, to be just!
Even as she knows no sympathy
With abject things, she fails to see;
For her pure soul, and eye of light,
Make every thing she sees seem bright.
Then lady, lady! twine the wreath,

For thee alone the verse was strung —
And if the muse has dared to breathe

One feeling that were best unsung,
Remember that the minstrel's soul,
At times, will spurn his heart's control;
And then thine eye will chide in vain,
For pity must elute the stain.

But to my song. Lord Nial sought
In vain for the repose of thought;
Nay, as he sank, he felt the thrill
Of life renewed, and, stranger still,
Each gaping vent of soul and gore
Was instant closed, and burned no more;
And every fibre of his frame

Seemed instant changed, yet still the same;
For, though the weight of time seemed past,
And he had 'scaped its bonds at last,
Though from his heart had passed away
Each particle of death's decay,
And though the visions of his mind
Grew more extended and refined,
Yet Love and Memory kept their range
Unshaken, in that mystic change;
For still Green Erin's weal was dear —
And still was Mary's image near!

By this he feared that boundless glow
Of joy must some delusion be;
For O! could mortal feel below
So blissful a reality?
Soon ceased the doubt, 't was all too much,
And reason reeled beneath the touch
Of hope and fear — throughout his frame
A torpor crept, and he became
Inanimate — what time life hung
Suspended, down the warrior went;
But Oh! 't is not for minstrel's tongue
To track him in his bright descent.

SONG.

“ Dream no more of doubt and anguish,
Hope to blight, and sword to kill —
Must a hapless maiden languish
For her truant lover still ?

“ Well she played her part, and wary —
—Well she led that host to bay —
Vengeance owes to gentle Mary
Half the laurels won today !

“ Up! awake! the wreath’s entwining,
Meet to deck a hero’s brow ;
Beauty’s eyes are round thee shining ;
Happy youth! arouse thee now.”

The trance had left his vision free,
But soon he closed his ravished eyes ;
O! dream of glory! where was he ?
In heaven? Ay, heaven’s own paradise.
Whate’er you dream of gems and flowers,
Of birds, and brooks, and gardens fair,

And shades and glades, and fairy bowers,
Were in one whirl of beauty there ;
Nor star, nor sun, conducted a ray ;
The lovely world in which he lay
Seemed in itself an orb of day,
—As if an inborn soul went through,
And warmed, and lit, and moved it too ;
For every thing seemed rife with soul ;
And such a thrill of rapture stole
Above — beneath — throughout, the whole,
That rock, and river, vale and mound,
Seemed conscious of the charms around ;
And wherever you gazed thro' the cloudless blue,
No horizon dim obscured the view ;
And that world of beauty appeared to be
The boundless home of eternity ;
And there were a thousand forms of light,
All gliding about in that soldier's sight,
Such beautiful visions, so blest and wise,
And as pure as the glow of their native skies ;
For sin never sat on such lips and eyes,
That still as that knight in amazement lay,
He felt in his soul he should rise and pray.
But what could he think of the blooming girls,
With their beautiful eyes, and their shining curls,

That when he awoke from that trance profound,
Were singing, and laughing, and dancing round?
O! what could he think, but that woman alone,
Of all that above or around him shone,
Denoted a kindred with beings above;
For their cheeks full of bloom, and their eyes full
 of love,
And their limbs full of motion, and hearts full of
 mirth,
Seemed all formed upon models transplanted from
 earth;
For in earth, or in heaven, or in pride, or in shame,
Still woman, dear woman! is ever the same.

“Oh! if ’t is all some baseless thing,
 The bubble of an aching brain,
Some god in pity charge the sling,
 And crush me ere I wake again.”

He rose, and all was as it seemed,
He did not rave, he had not dreamed;
Those forms were palpable as bright,
As full of feeling as of light;
And then again he clasped his brow,
“Good God! if she were absent now,

O Thou who lifts the soul to prayer,
 In mercy guide, in mercy spare:
 Or change again thy servant's doom,
 And let him leave this world of bloom,
 For Mary, and a dreamless tomb.
 But hark! that sigh — or do I err?
 Or came that sound indeed from her?
 The nymph behind this veil of gold
 Has Mary's step, and Mary's mould;
 She trembles too! — by all that 's bright,
 I fear to lift her shade of light;
 For should some other's form be there,
 Oh God! how shall I stand the test!"

The veil is up — the brow is bare —
 That rush, that shout, proclaim the rest;
 The lady is his Mary fair,
 And now indeed is Nial blest.

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The task is done, the goal is won —
 The race were haply best unrun;
 The hope is gone that bade me soar,
 The harp would fain respond no more!
 But still, dear girl, methinks I hear

You ask me if the bridal 's near !
Methinks you bid me note with care
Each ringlet of that young bride's hair ;
And how she looked when dressed to woo,
And if her gems were false or true,
And fifty thousand mystic things
Of frills, and feathers, caps, and rings ;
But Oh ! in sooth the song were vain ;
I tell you o'er, and o'er again,
That Mary was as you, the same,
As full of passion, pride, and flame ;
No flimsy May-day dream ideal —
But living, loving, lasting, real —
Who gloried then, as you do now,
To see her lover quail and bow ;
To hang upon his heart embraced —
To feel his arms entwine her waist —
To read his homage in his eyes —
To drink the odor of his sighs —
To hear him vow he 'd burst the snare ;
Yet still to find him lingering there,
A greater captive than before,
And sighing that he 'd sin no more !
Who gloried then, as all maids do,

In flounce and frill, green, white, or blue;
And pink, and patch, and looking-glass,
And mischief too ; but let that pass !
I 'll not reproach you with your crimes,
Though, faith ! they 're wild enough by times.
And so, sweet girl, howe'er you chide,
Yourself must help to deck the bride.
Even such let fancy paint her brow;
As you presume your own is now ;
High — heavenly — words can ill express
So much of love and loveliness.
And so, to sketch the portrait through,
Even let her pass before your view,
In all, *almost* as bright as you,
And then suppose her garb as fair
As you yourself would choose to wear,
Upon your bridal morn so near,
For, trust me, it will soon be here !
Unless you 've given the final yea,
Before your bard had time to pray
For sunshine on your wedding-day.
But hush ! 't is now the hour of hours —
The bridal path is strewn with flowers,
And smiles abound, and music breathes,
And bride's-maids don their fairy wreathes,

And forth it goes, that joyful train,
And now 't is homeward bound again,
And softest whispers steal around,
And Mary's eyes are on the ground,
But still her cheek is rife with pride;
—I wish you joy, sweet lady bride!
And now the feast awaits the guest,
And now — suppose you dream the rest —
How lovers sue, and ladies sigh,
And melt, and grant, and still deny;
How toppers, for the strife inspired,
Begin to wish the dames retired;
And toast the bride with roguish smile,
And talk of mystic things the while;
Of feasts in prospect — one, you know,
In nine or ten months hence, or so —
And how — and how the night comes on,
And how the maids look sly anon,
And smile, and rise and steal away,
And how they chide the bridegroom's stay; —
For here the modest muse retires,
And wraps her mantle round the wires.

Notes to Lord Nial.



NOTES TO LORD NIAL.

THE time of this poem is a night and a day; the scenes are all laid in the vicinity of Mucross Lake, County Kerry, in the south of Ireland.

Note 1, page 1, line 8. — "Dry lodgings and good entertainment for man and beast." [The above inducements to sojourn are often held out to the traveller by the sign-boards of the village inns in Ireland.]

2, p. 1, line 17. — "McDermott was such a man," &c. [A person answering to the description of this man, as he appears in the book, actually did reside for a short time in the neighborhood of the lakes, about thirteen years ago, and disappeared under somewhat similar circumstances. For the sake of convenience, the reader is invited to suppose him the identical person who figures in the introduction to Lord Nial.]

3, p. 3, line 17. — "Chance always behaves herself as if she went by clock-work." [As it is well known that the old adages of the peasantry of all countries are in general verified by the results, it is of little importance to discuss the propriety of Mr. Murphy's alarm; even to the present hour, there is scarcely a farmer of the old stock about the lakes of Killarney, who would not tremble at the idea of a stormy first of May.]

4, p. 3, line 19. — "A prince that formerly lived in these parts named O'Donohoe." [Histories of this

prince have been written by a hundred pens. That such a man did exist, has never been doubted; and it is equally certain (letting the miraculous part go for what it is worth) that he terminated a life of usefulness and glory, by deliberately urging his favorite steed Belus into the lake of Mucross, on a fine May morning, some thirteen hundred years ago. The manner of his adieu, as related by Mr. Murphy, is that on which most writers, including Dr. Keating, have agreed.]

5, p. 11, lines 21, &c. — “A white mist, which I could liken to nothing but a silver veil, rose gradually around the lake, to about the altitude of a lofty sorbos.” [In mountainous countries, white vapors, like the one described, are frequently observed floating around large bodies of water; and at such times, it is to be presumed that there are certain things going on, which are too sacred for the gaze of mortality. This mist does not obscure the water from an adjacent eye, although it serves as a cloak of darkness for those beings who are more easily imagined than described; and thus, music is often heard upon the water, while the minstrel from whom it proceeds is perfectly invisible.”—AIKENS.

N. B. As to its resistance to the touch, we cannot vouch; however, there is nothing in it much more extraordinary than in an account we once read of the smoke gathering so thick over the ruins of a burning city, that a man who jumped into it from the top of a very high steeple, with the intention of destroying himself, could not fall through!]

16, p. 12, lines 7, 8, and 9. — “Not the flimsy phantoms that our bards are wont to describe them, but youthful, noble, palpable, and athletic.” [It may be proper to inform the reader, that the supposed inhabitants of the lakes, are not shadows, but actual beings, endowed with the same faculties as man, only in a more refined state, and like him, under the influence of all the nobler passions, especially those of

pride and love. They were originally sojourners of the upper world, but on account of pre-eminent virtues, and to indemnify them for undeserved persecutions, they were removed to happier abodes, and endowed with immortality, without having been subjected to the dominion of death. It is said they have the power to return again for a season, at their pleasure, and to mingle in the bustle and concerns of a grosser existence. These occurrences are the subjects of a thousand tales. We remember several, from which we select the following, the more so as it was told us as authentic.]

As Mr. James N——, of Antrim, in the north of Ireland (a gentleman who, we believe, is still living) was one evening sauntering along the banks of Lough Nea, he saw a very beautiful and elegantly attired female, reclining beside the margin of the tide. He approached, and bowed; the lady smiled, and a long conversation was the result. They met on many an evening afterwards, in, or about the same place, and at length their courtship terminated in marriage. For nearly seven years she was the kindest and most affectionate of wives; but one evening, at the termination of that period, as she was walking with her husband by the spot where he had first seen her, she suddenly stopped, and sighing to him despondingly, "James, I am called!" rushed forward, and in an instant vanished beneath the wave. No vestige of her was ever afterwards discovered, and to this very hour the "old man weeps for his fairy bride."]

7, p. 12, line 16.— "All, said I? ah! no; there was one—one exception; and that—a maid."— [We trust that no person will be unkind enough to suspect that McDermott's vision, and all therewith connected, were brought about in consequence of his lady love having taken it into her head to evade the discipline of a crusty old father by flinging herself into his horse-pond. We mention the last in preference to any other place that might answer a love-

lorn damsel equally well under similar circumstances, as it reminds us of a little matter that we remember to have once occurred, and which, no matter how irrevelent it may be to the present purpose, we will here relate. A certain inn-keeper's daughter fell deeply in love with her father's hostler; Boniface, however, being as hard in the heart as a winter cabbage, not only refused his consent, but locked my lady up in the garret, and kicked my gentleman out of the door. In a few days afterwards Miss was released; but taking the loss of her Knight of the curry-comb in high dudgeon, the very first use she made of her liberty was to run into a field, and tumble herself heels over head into a horse-pond. Here, for the sake of love and poetry, we would wish to leave her; but not so; it was in November, and the water was as cold as ice, so, the young lady was scarcely drowned above a second and a half, when, finding that no person seemed inclined to wet his jacket to save her, she deliberately got up and went home again; and that very evening we saw her in the parlour, singing "Love's Young Dream," and mending a hole in the heel of her stocking.]

8, p. 14, line 20. — "He presented the volume." [This is the only event we can remember of a book having been presented; however, rings and amulets were often received under similar circumstances. Being for a time a resident of the village of Fedemore, in the south of Ireland, an old woman of the place showed us an amethyst heart, which she affirmed was the gift of a beautiful mern (mermaid) to her son, about ten years before. The young man, it appeared, was missing a short time after, having, as was supposed, followed a recruiting party that had lately been beating up through the town; but nothing could persuade the poor old lady but that he was living with the water-nymph, at the bottom of Laughnapystha. To follow up the story, she declared that the amethyst had the gift of stopping blood. Having one day received rather an awk-

ward cut, while in quest of a rabbit, and being anxious to prove the miraculous quality of the stone, we ran to Mrs. Delany's, and, dear reader, you may laugh as you will — but upon our soul, we had hardly clutched it in the palm of our hand, and received the old lady's benediction, when the blood stopped, and the wound was perfectly healed on the third day after.]

10. p. 15. line 16.—“Better to be sure,—far better the labor of that dark-eyed minstrel of the water, in its own native strength, than after being modelled to suit the whims, and fancies, of a more grovelling genius.” [We suspect (however McDermott may be accused of having bounced at times) that he tells nothing but the truth here. We, ourself have known of a great many effusions (both prose and poetry) that were spoiled in the improvement. On one occasion, a certain editor, a friend of ours, received anonymously a copy of beautiful stanzas, which he succeeded in embellishing to such a degree, that any person who had the felicity of reading them, as they were printed, might very conscientiously have set down the poor devil of an author as a fool. As an instance, a part of the poem ran thus:

“His rival neared, and poised his javelin true,
Quick for its victim's heart the weapon sped,
He reeled before her — murmured, “Love, adieu!”
One gasp — one sigh — Oh, God! is Henry dead?”

The unpoetical scoundrel actually marked out these lines, and after rubbing his temples for two hours and a half, and wasting a couple of sheets of congenial foolscap, perpetrated and interlined the following, by way of *improvement*:

“He took an arrow from his quiver,
And fired it at his youthful rival's heart;
Says he, ‘Dear girl, a last good bye forever;
For I, alas! am going to depart.’” [!!!]

11, p. 16, line 1. — “It cannot find readers, even in Irishmen,” &c. [This is but too literally correct; and hence the reason that the Irish language, which in its purity is as soft and musical as the Italian, and far more expressive, is nothing better than a congregation of bastard sounds, which fall with a ludicrous effect even on the ears of an Irishman himself. — People have no more right to confound the Irish language with the ochs and arrahs which they hear daily, than they have to mistake that most abominable of all dialects, the guttural sputterings of the Lancashire boor, for genuine English.]

11, p. 16, line 26, &c. — Murphy had often watched him,” &c. [Whether McDermott wrote the tale, and through some unaccountable vacuum in his memory forgot it again, or not, we shall not pretend to decide; but had he even done so, his malady would not have been without a precedent; for Becker relates a story of a certain doctor in Germany, who wrote a treatise on physic, and after having had it in his possession for several years, swore before a magistrate that it was given him by an angel. As the work, however, was exceedingly stupid, some people were hardy enough to doubt the divinity of its origin; but still, though the writing was notoriously his own, the poor man could never be persuaded, till the day of his death, that he had not received it in propria persona, from the shade of *Æsculapius*.]

13, p. 17, line 21. — “Ossian could have done no more.” [All the world knows that McPherson was a bonny Scott and that he has tried to claim Ossian as a countryman. Now McPherson knew better; for he was too well acquainted with his subject to have made any thing, unless a wilful mistake. The poetry of Ossian is all Irish; decidedly so, and exclusively so; his song is the very language that the unlettered Irishman makes use of in his everyday discourse: full of figure — full of metaphor — and occasionally full of rigmarole. In all parts of

Munster and Connaught, you can find men that never heard of Ossian, and yet who write verses to the same measure, and sometimes equally as good ; and we have often had the fortune, in our peregrinations through the wilder districts of Munster, to hear old women, who never learned to read or write in their lives, extemporizing stanzas in the same strain, and as full of pathos and sublimity as those of the warrior bard himself ; and singing them too, to airs of such melancholy sweetness, that memory dwells with rapture on the divinely sorrowful sensations they occasioned. We would ask, where will you find such things in Scotland ? Not from Berwick on Tweed to John O'Groats. However, she has a greater boast — that of McPherson himself ; who has given a dignity to the poem, which, without his master hand, it could never have possessed, and who has saved the effusions of the son of Fingal (to use one of his own similes) from “fading away like the morning mist from the hills of Ravaron.”]

14, p. 18, line 26, &c. — “It is not for nothing the cat broke the looking-glass last week ; and has n't the death-watch been ticking all about the house ever since the night that Molly Rooney, the lucky woman, saw poor Mac's fetch, with a short candle in its hand, jumping into the pool of water.” [The breaking of a looking-glass is considered very ominous of evil ; but if poor Puss is the perpetrator, it is the devil entirely ; for cats are held in particular abhorrence by the superstitious. A lucky woman is neither more nor less than a witch ; one of the harmless sort, however, whose chief business is to cure warts, paralytic strokes, eye-pearls, and in short, all the diseases that are beyond the skill of the legitimate physician. They are also said to possess the faculty of double sight ; that is, the power of seeing visions. A fetch is the “doubleman,” or counterpart of the original. They are never seen but with candles in their hand, the length of which is supposed to foretel

the relative periods of existence of the persons they represent. Many stories are told of people who have seen their own fetches. The following may be relied on, as a fact: Mr. John Steel, of the city of Dublin, was one night lying on a sofa in his parlor, perfectly awake, and close to a candle that was burning on the table, when a figure entered the apartment, holding a taper which was burning to the socket, in his hand. He approached the couch, bending his eyes most intently upon Mr. Steel, and that gentleman now perceived, with the utmost consternation, that the figure before him, in face and person, was the exact counterpart of himself. Having remained about three minutes, it withdrew, not in the manner of spirits, but with a slow and solemn, though noiseless step, and by a door which stood in a different direction from that through which he had entered. Dr. Brewster, in his letters to Scott, has explained the cause of appearances similar to the present, and interlined them with many very wonderful anecdotes; however, in no instance that we remember, has he spoken of persons who were favored with visits from their second selves. What makes the story of Mr. Steel the more remarkable, is the melancholy fact, that a few days after he had seen the prophetic vision, he was a corpse.]

15. p. 20, line 30, &c. — “In an instant she was out of sight, and the terror-stricken publican and his wife closed the door under the firm conviction that they had seen a banshee.” [The banshee is a death-spirit, particularly Irish. It is supposed that there is one connected with each of the families of the old Milisian race, who, on the decease, or the approaching decease of any of the members thereof, may be seen in the vicinity of the house, wringing her hands and weeping bitterly. The terms of their own existence, it is presumed, is connected with that of the families to which they are severally attached, and Sir Walter Scott has evidently taken the idea of his “White lady of Avenel” from the Irish banshee. By

the way, it is to be lamented that Sir Walter never took an Irish subject, especially for his muse; no man could have done it so much justice, for his style was perfectly adapted to the glory of the ancient days of Erin; besides, in such a case he would have been able to have made his knights and dames, ladies and gentlemen; that is, given them the advantage of an education; for, whatever may be said of their brogue and their blarney, we do not remember having read of any of the elite of the western isle, who could neither read or write their own names. While speaking of this beautiful poet, we would fain pay some tribute to his genius, — we would fain declare our gratitude for the many hours of rapture we have derived from the perusal of his wonderful productions. His poetry has certainly neither the power and sublimity of Byron's, or the wit and brilliancy of Moore's; but there is such an indescribable charm in the harmony of its flow, — such a perfect keeping in the similes and circumstances — such purity of sentiment, and withal the colorings, are so chaste and palpable, that, while we are far from deeming him one of the greatest of poets, it is our decided opinion, and we presume the opinion of the majority of English readers, that the most pleasing one to which the world has ever given birth, was Sir Walter Scott.]

15, p, 22, line 7. — “O for the spur of Fin Mallin.” [Fin Mallin was a sort of Jack the Giant Killer. One day, while riding along the banks of the Shannon, in the neighborhood of Killaloo, he was attacked by a host of magicians and ogres; when, seeing no hope from resistance, he turned his horse's head towards the river, gave one furious dig with his rowels, and fairly jumped across, a distance of nearly three miles. The impression of his horse's hoofs are to be seen in a mountain on the banks of the Shannon, to this very day.]

16, p. 22, line 52. — “Thus, dearest, I am thine for ever.” [The printer has left out the *I*, which was

most especially wanted, and that is all we have to say about it !]

17, p. 22, line 27. — “It did not appear to sink, or to resolve, but, as it were, instantly to become nothing.” [This, we presume, will be considered as a bull; however, there have been many writers, and they not Irishmen either, who have been obliged to give force to their ideas, by now and then going a little beyond the mark. Scott breaks a steel helmet like a hazel nut; and we have had fifty poets who have filled the heavens, on different occasions, with the blast of a warder’s horn.]

Notes to Canto First.

NOTES TO CANTO FIRST.

Note 1, page 28, line 14.

“Behold the eagle’s nest.”

The Eagle’s Nest is the most interesting, and one of the loftiest mountains of the lakes. On the summit the eagle has built his nest for ages, the serenity of his reign being undisturbed by the hand of the prowler, and, for the very best reason in the world too—it is beyond his reach. Besides the sublimity of its appearance, this hill is supposed to possess one of the most powerful echoes in the world.

Note 2, page 28, line 15.

“Or lay me by thy wild cascade,
O Sullivan!”

For a description of this beautiful waterfall, see
“Wright’s Tour to the lakes.”

Note 3, page 29, line 13.

“Where shall I find thy mate, Lough Lane?”

“Lough Lane, or Laune, is the ancient and most proper name of the lakes of Killarney.”

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Note 4, page 41, lines 22 & 23.

“For O! it seemed a thing of air,
Not built, but raised by magi there.”

Palaces and gardens, such as the one here described, are often met with in the neighborhood of those lakes, which are supposed to be inhabited. The wanderer has frequently discovered bowers and brooks, flowers and fountains, occupying a spot which, when he last saw it, was perchance nothing but a moss bank, or a desert. A gentleman in the north of Ireland, however, proved to us by the most invincible arguments, that those appearances were merely the reflections of objects that actually existed at the bottom of the tide, which were forced upwards upon the vision, either by the refraction of rays when the sun was in a certain quarter, or through some mystical influence of the people of the deep themselves. He was led to this conclusion by the following singular fact — at least, he told it to us as one, backing his word the while, by several very responsible oaths; and as he was one of those gentlemen who are ever ready to enter the lists in defence of their veracity, and withal could snuff a candle at twelve yards distance with a pistol bullet, we thought it best to believe him. Upon a certain winter's evening, when the snow was six inches deep in any direction within the horizon, as he was sauntering along the banks of Lough Neagh, he perceived some very brilliant objects emerging from the waters before him. For an instant he relieved his vision with the shade of his hand; but when he looked again, lo! he was in the vicinity of a palace and garden of the most inconceivable splendor. Those he described so minutely, and with such earnestness, that it was almost impossible to doubt his tale; on the birds and flowers he was most eloquent, as there were numbers of each which he had ever deemed to be strangers to a European clime: humming-birds, for instance, were more numerous than he had ever seen butterflies in a nursery. He had been taking notes of observation for about

an hour, when, of a sudden the sun dipt behind a hill, and behold! in an instant all were gone; for now, instead of brooks and flowers, birds and bowers, there was nothing to be seen but a bank of frozen snow.

Note 5, page 40, line 19.

“Without the solace even of crime.”

Some people may be inclined to doubt the efficacy of such solace, and perchance to edge in a word or two about the pleasures of suffering innocence. If so, in the name of the poet, we beg leave to differ with them; for, in spite of all that may be said of the horrors of a guilty conscience, and so forth, we dare say (ay, and swear it too) that there is far more consolation in the idea that we are suffering, or about to suffer, for the crimes we have committed, than for those which we know nothing about.

Note 6, page 41, lines 3 & 4.

“Dare I unbreast the mystery,
That which I am—what he might be?”

To a full comprehension of the poem, it is necessary that the reader should be made acquainted with the attributes of the being who has spoken thus. She was of a race who (as we before observed) though endowed with immortality, are subject to the influence of all the passions, yea, even to a greater extent than beings of a briefer period; for, as their perceptions are of a much higher order, they are accessible to deeper impressions. The inhabitants of the lakes of Ireland, and the oriental people of the sea, are evidently creatures of the same grade, differing only in a few points, which, so far as we are concerned, are in favor of the former; for, while it is the province of the one to confer benefits, the other is considered as rather the enemy, than the friend, of

man. Neither can be esteemed as supernatural; their properties, habits, and manners, differing very little from those of the human family; nay, it is the general opinion of those who are conversant in such matters, that they themselves are of the race of Adam, though, for some reason with which we are unacquainted, they have escaped the general curse, being neither doomed to earn their bread by the sweat of the brow, or to take up their habitation with the worm. They are also partially debarred from holding any direct intercourse with us, of the more exposed and ruder portions of the universe, though such events are often known to occur. O'Dwyer thus describes their natures and penalties: "The people of the deep, or more properly speaking, those who through the water pass to and from their habitations are in the scale of beings of a much higher order than fleeting man, their forms and beauties more faultless—their powers and perceptions less limited—and their ideas more capable of compassing happiness. They are still, however, fallible creatures, liable to the commission of crime, and also to its attendant punishment. Like man too, they bow the knee to the first great cause, and live in the certain belief of a last change, when every one shall be numbered in his lot. They are forbidden, under the most fearful penalties, to make known the mysteries of their natures; however, they are permitted by indirect signs, and dark allusions, to excite the wonder of those whom they wish to translate to their abodes of bliss; and if at such time the clue be taken, and acted on, the favored individual undergoes a palpable change of nature in his descent, and becomes as one of those, the mysteries of whose being he has dared to unravel.

Note 7, page 42, line 1.

"He robes him in a hoary haze."

Spirits are often said to descend in mists; still

should any objection be made, we must only kiss the rod ; at the same time however, begging leave to remind the reader that a spirit would make a far more respectable appearance in the shape of a mountain hoar, than did the ghost of the father of one of Sir Walter Scott's characters, when he embraced the lady of the lime kiln in the shape of a cloud of ashes !

Note 8, page 43, line 23.

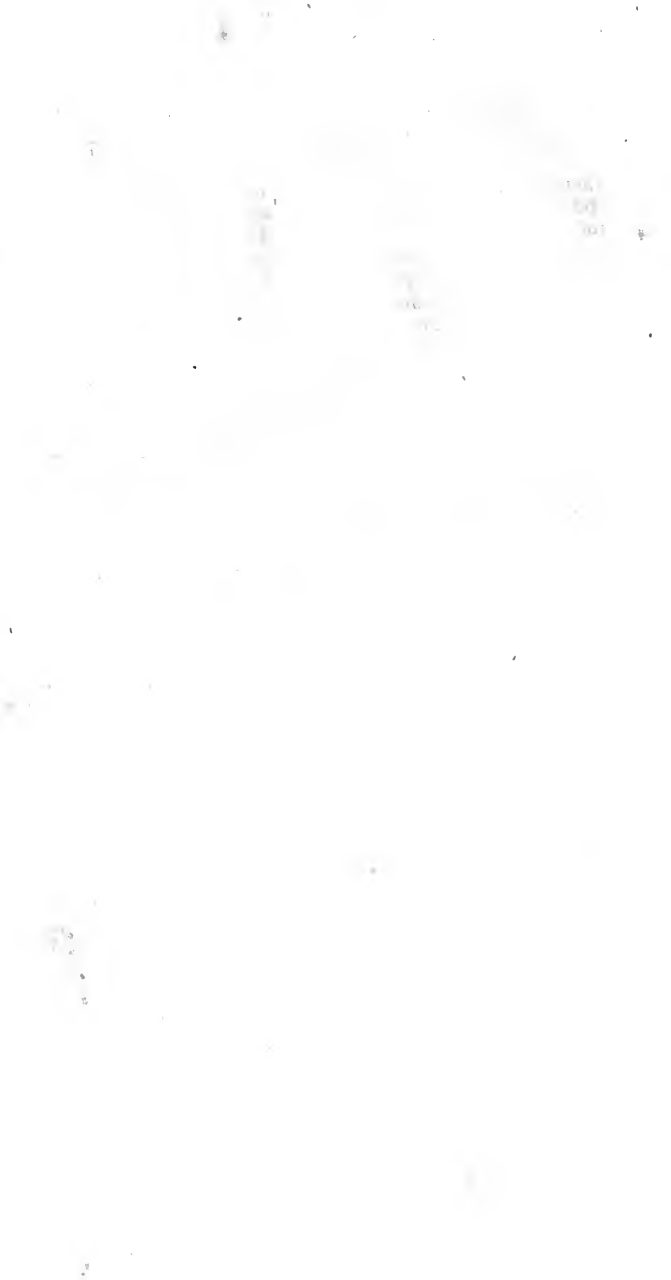
" Hail to the chief O'Donohoe !"

As O'Donohoe, the monarch of the lake, is master of the destinies of his people, and according to Mr. Ferguson (who says he foretold the resurrection of the freedom of Erin) known to possess the powers of divination, the young lady very naturally thought that he was the most proper person to apply to in her present dilemma.

Note 9, page 50, line 17.

" And the songs of the nightingales, low on their boughs,
As they woo the young roses, and warble their vows."

The poet deserves a very severe stricture for introducing the above beautiful figure, it having been used by five hundred thousand different poets already. However, as the mighty Byron, and the silver-tongued Anacreon are among the number, the humble author of Lord Nial may hope to be forgiven.



Notes to Canto Second.



NOTES TO CANTO SECOND.

Note 1, page 53, line 1.

“ Why sleeps my Mary ? ”

It may be said that Mary is a strange sort of an every day name for a water-nymph, — that Titinia, or Clarissa, or Zaphyra, &c. would have answered much better. This we deny. If Mary is the most general name in the world, it is because it is the most beautiful — (there is no flower so common as the rose) — and so, we will venture to say it is in great request among the “ ladies of the lake.” There is a witchery about it that is altogether its own. It is, in fact, a volume of beautiful poetry in itself. Call a queen Mary, and you add dignity to her rank — Mary of Scotland owes half her immortality to her name; and who can read a ballad about the fair maid Mary milking her brindle cow at a cottage door, and not feel a palpitation at his heart, and a wish that he was destined to be the happy man that was to coax her away from her father and mother? We would particularly advise all mammas to call, at least, one of their daughters Mary; should nature prove unkind, they will find it of infinite service; we have never had the pleasure of knowing a lady of the name that had not twenty beaux at her apron strings: and it is equally certain, that we never heard of a *Miss* Mary, in the sere and yellow, in the course of our life.

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Note 2, page 54, line 14.

“A wooing, wandering Red Branch Knight.”

There were several orders of knighthood in Ireland even anterior to the time of Saint Patrick; that of the “Red Branch” was the most distinguished. It was a complete counterpart of the “Round Table,” every member of it being ready on all occasions, to venture single handed against a million, in support of their individual lady love’s claims, to be the most beautiful, and accomplished Princess in the whole world. The chief distinction between the heroes of King Arthur, and those of the Red Branch, was this; that while the former conquered few but invisible enemies, and besieged none but castles in the air, the latter won a deserved immortality (though it is somewhat obscured by the mean destruction of the annals of their country for political purposes) by the glory of their exploits on the continent of Europe.

Note 3, page 55, lines 24, &c.

“Camp, treasure, all were left in scorn,
But not the little battle born.”

It must be acknowledged that the Irish were but too fond of quarrelling among themselves in all periods of their history; the almost infinite number of their petty princes was, perhaps, the chief occasion of the frequency of civil warfare. This great failing became hereditary, and has descended from father to son, down to the present generation. It makes them the easiest prey imaginable; for when it is thought that they are on too good terms together for the safety of a political enemy, all that that enemy has to do, is to set them at loggerheads touching the supremacy of their different creeds, and lo! they fall to, and beat each other with such a hearty good will, that they have no time, nor inclination to take notice of a third party, who is all

the while very busy in laughing at them both. Had it not been for this peculiarity, Henry the Second would never have planted a foot in Ireland, or at least, having planted it there, he would never have taken it off again; the shamrock would never have been quartered with the rose — and Irishmen would not have been sneered at all over the world, because it was discovered that they were not altogether very accurate pronouncing dictionaries of a foreign language.

Note 4, page 56, line 13.

“The base McDonough’s awful crime.”

It was McDonough (or as it should have been written McMorrough,) that brought about the invasion of Ireland by Henry the second. The incidents of the affair are highly dramatic; and as is usual in all matters of importance, from the creation of Adam downwards, the plot of the story is set in motion by a woman. The main points are as follows — O’Rourke, Prince of Brefni, goes on a tour of pilgrimage to Saint Patrick’s purgatory, leaving his wife, Dervorguile behind him to take care of the house; meanwhile down comes McMorrough, King of Lienster, who was an old flame of the lady’s previous to her marriage, and prevails on her to run away with him to Dublin. O’Rourke returns — misses his wife and applies to Roderick O’Connor, monarch of all Ireland, for redress. Roderick, in behalf of his vassal, invades Lienster, while McMorrough, being unable to cope with his adversaries, sets off to England, and from thence to Britany in France, and makes his affairs known to the second Harry of England, who was there at the time. Harry (who is delighted with the intelligence, as he had been a long time throwing a hankering eye at the land of Shelelah) gives him his royal permission to beat up for volunteers. This he finds a very thriving employment, as bread and beef were at the time, among the very rarest

commodities of the English market ; and so, having mustered, as he thinks, a sufficient number of recruits for his purpose, he embarks them for Ireland. The invaders, however, are defeated, but Roderick O'Conner instead of hanging McMurrough, and sending his tag, rag, and bobtail back again, absolutely restores the one, to his former dignities, and allows the others to remain on the Island, and to become the sole residents of a city in the Province of Leinster. From this period treason is hatched apace, Henry and McMurrough being at the top and bottom of it, — bribery and corruption undermine the bulwarks of the kingdom — Roderick becomes alarmed, but too late — the King of England arrives, and then all is blood, murder, anarchy, and confusion, to the end. — There is a striking resemblance between the loves of McMorrough and Dervorguile, and that of Paris and Helen. The Irishman, however, has an advantage over the Trojan, for while one, though an infamous traitor, is a very good soldier ; the other, according to Homer, seems fit for nothing on the face of God's earth, but a lady's physician, or a man milliner.

Note 5, page 58, line 21.

“ Then grant, Most Highest,
From thine holy throne.”

Should the reader be inclined to take exception to this little hymn, as breathing sentiments not in accordance with those of discontented Knights and moss troopers, we would beg leave to remind him that his religious duties were considered paramount to all others by the Irish soldier of the olden time. — Should they follow up the objection, and say, that it was unnatural for men to call so solemnly on the Almighty to aid them in their work of vengeance, we would reply in their defence, that they were still something better than the Scotch borderers, who never went on a “ forray,” that is, to pillage their

neighbors' goods, and set fire to their houses, without first saying, "Every man his pater-noster." If we quote aright, Sir Walter Scott, while speaking of Sir William of Deloraine, alludes to this fact in the following doggerels :

"Prayer knew he never a one,
Unless to patter an Ave Mary,
While riding on a border forray."

Note 6, page 85, line 21.

"Such pangs as rack the struggling eel,
Not even the lion flayed can feel."

This is a well known truth ; no animal can suffer as much torment by being stripped of its skin, as those of the serpent form ; inasmuch as their life runsequally in every part. This last argument is easily proved ; for if you separate any portion of a quadruped from the leading member, it almost immediately loses the sense of feeling, while the smallest divided particle of the eel, or serpent, will linger in its misery for hours.

Note 7. page 86, line 10.

"The suffering limb would take a part
"Of suffering from the tortured heart."

Should any man be so dull as not to comprehend the meaning of this, we will put him in the way of finding it out to a hair. Whenever he has a violent tooth-ache, let him immediately put his finger into the fire, and then, according as the pangs of the finger increase, he will discover that there is a corresponding decline of pain in the affected gum. Should he be so unfortunate as not to have an aching tooth, at the time, whereby to prove it, all he has to do in the world, is to prick himself with the point of a pen-knife in one arm, until the pain becomes exceedingly troublesome ; and he will then find that the already wounded arm will receive great benefit by his inflicting an equal punishment on the other.



Notes to Canto Third.



NOTES TO CANTO THIRD.

Note 1, page 95, line 11.

“ They were not of the lowly kerne ”

After Henry the Second had established himself on the throne of Ireland, and every hope of independence was gone, a number of desperate, and patriotic gentlemen, assembled among the mountains of the south, from whence they often made successful sallies on the invading armies less, however, for the hope of victory, than for the pleasures of revenge. — A celebrated hero, Lord Fin, or Fin Nial, of Kerry, a lineal descendant of Con, of the hundred fights, was their leader. This band of patriots was completely destroyed in a plain adjacent to Mucross lake, but not before they had slain more than ten times their own numbers, of the enemy. The body of Lord Nial could never be discovered, though sought for with great perseverance, in consequence of a reward that was offered for his head. The poem clears up the mystery, by shewing what had become of him; and indeed, leaving every other inducement out of the question, he was likely enough to have flung himself into the lake, if it was for nothing more than to save himself from being exhibited on a gibbet, and to cheat the enemy of their prize; at all events, Sir William Delamarck was actuated by such a motive, when he desired Quentin Durward's uncle to fling his head into the river.

Note 2, page 97, line 21.

"Else through the gap of wild Dunloe."

This gap, or chasm, presents a most glorious image of all that is sublime in darkness and desolation; it forms a very interesting feature in the scenery about the lakes of Killarney, and will repay the tourist with interest, for the three days that it is necessary he should take in its examination. A gentleman once remarked that as the way to happiness was very narrow and very crooked, the gap of Dunloe could be nothing in the world but the high road to heaven.

Note 3, page 99, line 1.

"Among the rocks on Glenna's brow."

Glenna is a mountain of much celebrity. For a description of it, see "Smith's Residence at the Lakes."

Note 4, page 103, line 12.

—————"Bold Mac Art of Swords."

Swords was one of the most ancient cities in Ireland, and especially famous for the magnificence of its churches. It is now a wretched village, and with the exception of one or two singular ruins, cannot boast of even the wreck of its former greatness. — Mac Art, or McArt, was a scion of the noble family of M'Carty. His desertion of his country was attributed to various causes; some said that it was to gratify a private pique that he had entertained against his fellow chieftains, others attributed it to a more potent reason, — even that which kept Grouchie from the battle of Waterloo — English gold. On his first desertion he changed his name from McCarthy to McArt, and finally to the more English appellation of Lodar. The soldiers of the Irish camp nicknamed him "Lord Weathercock."

Note 5, page 103, line 23.

“Two warriors bear him from the floor.”

We presume that it is to be inferred from the reading of the poem (for the author has chosen to be a little mysterious about it) that these two warriors were neither more, or less, than the lady of the lake and her *fillette de chambre*. Previous to the encounter of the two armies, Mac Art had the rebels, as they were termed by the invaders, so completely surrounded, that it was impossible for them to have escaped by stealth, and their chance from battle was very small indeed; as the enemy, which consisted of twenty times their number, occupied the most advantageous ground. While matters were in this state, the royal army, apparently without any (at least reasonable) cause, forsook their position, and encamped along the shores of Mucross. Why Mac Art had resigned his advantage, remained a mystery, until the poem of Lord Nial threw some light on it. We remember to have heard an old ballad, in which it was set forth, that the Phoka, a rather disreputable order, of Irish fairy, having bound the chieftain to a hawthorn bush, with the single fillet of a spider's web, took his outward form from midnight till sunrise, and in that disguise assembled the besiegers, and marched them from the hills. The account, as it appears in the poem, however, is more probable, as the business was effected without the assistance of a supernatural agent; and besides, the exploit was not without a precedent. When Teague O'Brien, of Corofin, in the south of Ireland, wanted to be rid of the army of Murtagh, prince of the “Desies,” he found his way into his sleeping chamber one night, by means of bribing the sentinel; and having smothered him as he lay on his couch, he assumed his armor,—ordered an assembly of the troops, and under cover of the night, marched them away to a distance of twenty miles. If a gentleman would do so much for the sake of security, who can say what two young ladies would not do, for the sake of love.

Note 6, page 106, line 3.

“Erin’s nectar pure.”

We suppose that he means pure Irish whiskey ; for it was as much in vogue eight or nine hundred years ago, as it is at the present day. Indeed, the date of its invention, like that of the foundation of the most ancient of all families, the Ap Jenkins of Wales, appears to have commenced a little before the beginning of time. Previous to the first invasion by the Danes, and that is more than thirteen hundred years ago, it is said that St. Patrick’s well, in the south of Ireland, was a spring of genuine double X. —However this may be, we are unqualified to judge ; but as a proof of its virtues, we could take it on our death, that it contains, at the present day, the very best water in the world for making whiskey punch.

Note 7, page 111, line 19.

“Who, when a few short years are past,
Shall sink into their lairs at last,
Nor leave a soul to soar.”

We trust that these lines will give no offence, the more so, as we think the arguments advanced are not only reasonable, but infallible. It would be a sheer insult to immortality to class a few individuals that we know of among her ranks ; ill-tempered narrow-hearted blotches on humanity, that, fore God ! when speaking to one of them face to face, for half an hour, we naturally look behind for a tail to resolve the mystery. When such men as these come before us, knowing that they would only tend to make the society of the elect unhappy, and not wishing to send them, even in idea, any where else, for the sake of charity, it would be the best way to suppose, that through some unaccountable mismanagement in Nature, they were sent into the world without the incumbrance of souls at all.

Notes to Canto Fourth.

NOTES TO CANTO FOURTH.

Note 1, page 117, line 16.

"The sun is up, the lord of morn,
And comes the sense from whence it may,
I never gazed upon his horn" —

We must confess our ignorance as to what the author means by the horns of the sun. Perhaps, indeed, it would have put himself at a stand to explain it, unless it struck him that as gentlemen were more generally blessed with such incumbrances than ladies, his majesty the Sun was at least as well entitled to them as her most chaste of majesties the silver Moon, who is well known to have worn them in all ages of the world. If this is not a sufficient reason, we must even debit it to the convenience of the rhyme ; for, as Byron says,

"The rhyme obliges me to this ; sometimes
Kings are not more imperative than rhymes."

Note 2, page 119, line 4.

"The soldier knew him at a glance,
And faced his post, and lowered his lance."

This was the ancient method of salute : at the present day, the lance or firelock is carried or presented, in accordance with the rank of the officer who receives the salute.

Note 3, page 120, line 22.

"So spoke Sir Percy Hildebrand."

Sir Percy was a Norman, and the second in command of Lord Lodar's section of the united armies. He is represented as a man of overruling ambition—one, indeed, that could ill brook the idea of a superior, and who, if opportunity served, would use but little ceremony in getting rid of any person who might stand betwixt him and the pinnacle on his way to power. Lodar had long regarded him with a jealous eye, and it is both said and sung, that when Lord Nial's squadrons were heard advancing, the two leaders and their partizans, who had previously separated, were fighting among themselves. On the appearance of the outlaws, however, they again united, and both Lodar and Sir Percy were slain by Lord Nial, in the ensuing battle.

Note 8, page 121, lines 22.

"On, on they rushed, that noble band,
A falchion sheath in each right hand,
Which, as they neared the line at length,
They forward flung, with headlong strength."

We are uncertain whether or not the exploit was original with the troops of Lord Nial; their chief design was to show that they never again intended to sheath their weapons, save only in the breasts of their enemies.

Note 5, page 123, line 21.

"'Make ready,' and each falchion bright
Flashed upwards like a line of light."

"Prepare to charge," is the word now given; "Make ready", was that in general use among the ancient Europeans.

Note 6, page 126, line 24.

“By Haco’s head! that shout again!”

By the heads of Haco and Starchetar (two heroes of great antiquity) were, according to Keating, common oaths among the Irish before the invasion.

Note 7, page 129, line 7.

“And hark, the pivot captain’s shout,
‘Out, markers, by the centre out.’
Forth speed the markers, wheel about,
And cover in a row.”

Lines of battle were formed in the days of Henry the Second, and very likely in those of Yong Chung of China, who lived, Heaven only knows how many centuries before the creation of Adam, upon very nearly the same principle as they are at present. That is, regiments were formed into many columns of nearly equal proportions, and when the column in advance had come to the place appointed, those in the rear brought up their right or left shoulders, according to the pivot they marched by, and wheeled into line; markers previously running out to take up the distance of each, and by which to dress the whole. The adjutant of the present day performs the same duty as the pivot captain of the past. This is merely to be taken as a general idea of the formation of lines; for the commandants must act in accordance to the situation of their men, at the time they wish to form them. Some officers are even less expert in military manœuvres than the author of Lord Nial. It is said that a certain major of an English regiment (the third buffs) having got his men into situation from which his knowledge of Sir Harry Torrence’s maxims could not extricate them, and wishing to form a particular line, gave the following very original word of command: “Soldiers, from the centre of a hobble, to your proper places in a line, right in front on the garrison pump, double march.”!!!

Note 4, page 131, line 13.

"My lord, no demon could have driven
The favored of the pope and Heaven."

Previous to the invasion of Ireland by Henry the Second, the people refused to pay a certain tribute entitled St. Peter's Pence, to Adrian, the then pope of Rome, who was an Englishman. This had a great effect in the prostration of Ireland; for the pope, who was as a mighty bird of empire, under whose wings the petty monarchs of other nations nestled, not only threatened the people with excommunication if they did not immediately pay the money, but, as far as in him lay, made a present of their country to his compatriot Henry the Second, on condition that he would collect and remit it. Thus prepared, Henry landed in the kingdom, and threatened those who resisted with the curse of the Almighty. The natural result was then, as it would be now, under like circumstances (that is, allowing for the pope's great supremacy), obedience — men chose rather to wear the fetters of a transient king, than to set themselves against what they thought to be the command of an everlasting God; and thus the mingling of politics with religion, effected that, which haply else had defied the united power of foreign bribery, and foreign swords.

Note 8, page 142, lines 23.

"There's scarce a warrior still unblest,
Who bears the trefoil on his crest."

Need it be said that the trefoil is the green shamrock of Erin, "the most poetic of all emblems," the type of the blessed Trinity,—the insignia of the priest at the altar, and the warrior in the field. Many hundred years ago the renowned Brian Borhoime conquered under its auspices, and, in later days, the no less immortal Lord Edward Fitzgerald, and Robert Emmet were butchered in its defence. Neither the

myrtle or the rose have been more frequently immortalized in song, and neither have ever been sung in such beautiful and appropriate language as the following. We copy it at the risk of our reputation, as it may lead to invidious comparisons; it need scarcely be added that it is one of the melodies of the sweetest and wittiest of all bards, Anacreon Moore:

“ Through Erin’s isle,
 To sport the while,
 As Love and Valor wandered,
 With Wit, the spright,
 Whose quiver bright
 A thousand arrows squandered,
 Wheree’er they pass
 A triple grass
 Shoots up, with dew-drops streaming;
 As sweetly seen
 As emeralds green,
 Through purest crystal gleaming.
 O! the shamrock, the green immortal shamrock,
 Chosen leaf
 Of bard and chief,
 Old Erin’s native shamrock.

Says Valor, “ See,
 They spring for me;
 Those leafy gems of morning;”
 Says Love, “ No --- no!
 For me they grow,
 My fragrant path adorning;”
 But Wit perceives
 The tearful leaves,
 And cries, “ O! do not sever
 A type that blends
 Three God-like friends,
 Love, Valor, Wit forever!”
 O! the shamrock. &c.

Note 9, page 145, line 9.

—'T was Mary's self implored.

That Miss Mary did not choose to make herself visible until her appearance was likely to have little effect, may be considered as something that needs explanation. The fact is, had she done so, she would very probably have gained nothing; for, as hate and vengeance were the ruling passions of Lord Nial during the whirl of battle, he would have been a very improper subject for a love-lorn dame to essay to make an impression on. But had such been the case, and had the young lady succeeded in her stratagem, it would have been of but little advantage to Lord Nial's character as a soldier. The reader of this has no doubt read *Quentin Durward*, — one of the most beautiful of all romances, — at least twenty times; and we will venture to say, that he always felt himself out of humor with his young hero, at the passage in which he relinquishes the fight with Sir William Delamarek, to save the daughter of the Dutch Burgher. It always appeared to us as if the young chevalier was very glad of an excuse to get rid of his man; had it been otherwise, he might as well have given charge of the young lady to his uncle, as to have employed him to fight his battle. This, no doubt, struck Sir Walter as forcibly as it does us; but then it was necessary that he should do something towards the fulfilment of Mr. Saunder Souplejaw's prophecy.

All these matters duly considered, it will be seen, that the maiden of the mere took the very best time and plan in the world for effecting her purpose. — When the turmoil and expectations of life were past, Lord Nial's memory naturally recurred to those who made that life most dear to him; and the young lady, feeling that she herself is, or at least ought to be, the leading topic of his thoughts, shews herself, richly attired, to a group of brutal soldiers, and rushes by the lair of her lover, on her way to the lake. Has he

a spark of life? and can he resist the impulse to follow?—has he a spark of love? and can he have one hope left ungratified, but that of sharing the grave of his own devoted Mary? The idea of the dying soldier's being able to rise and follow in defence of the fugitive, is nothing improbable, for persons at the last stage of life, just as the spirit has been fluttering on the brink of another world, have been known to regain possession of all their faculties and energies, for a few moments, when inspired by some sudden and overwhelming impulse.

END OF NOTES.

The Wizard's Grave.

THE tradition runs as follows. — According to agreement, signed, sealed, and delivered, Loo Tyrrell, or as he is more commonly called, Lutherall, was to have become the property of a certain “gentleman in black.” Being determined, however, if possible, to deceive the first cause of his seduction from innocence, he prevails on another gentleman, in black, to make a second purchase, preparatory to which, it is necessary the first bond should be stolen, and destroyed. This is effected; and to make the cheat still more annoying when discovered, a forgery is substituted in its place; thus Loo Tyrrell, by the transfer, releases himself from all obligation to the first devil, while he still holds the power, in consequence of the loss of the bill of sale, of retaining him in his service.

THE WIZZARD'S GRAVE.

You think, because that stranger's brow
Is lighted up with laughter now,
That he is happy ! — Could you see
How ill his breast and brow agree,
You'd know his laughter, like the light,
On dead sea apples, false as bright.

The more the torch illumines the walls,
The more the dungeon's gloom appals ;
So he, the more his laughter swells,
The more his ruined heart rebels ;
As balsam from the hemlock wrung,
Destroys the sprig from whence it sprung.

Observe him well — his phrenzied mirth
Springs from the source whence tears have birth, ---
His wildest laughter analyzed,
Is little else than groans disguised. ---
I saw him in the crowded hall,
His seemed the maddest mirth of all ;

But — for I marked his cheek with care, —
The traitor smiles that lingered there,
Seemed wrung from madness, guilt and shame ;
A treacherous halo, like the flame
That floats o'er Pluto's pool of sin,
The beacon of a curse within.

The feast was over, and the hour
Was night's meridian, — beauteously
The moon-beams streamed on field and flower,
And not a zephyr kissed the sea,
Along whose shore, with anguished brow,
That mystic stranger wanders now.

Hark ! Heard ye not the distant bell
Herald the midnight — Heavens ! that shout,
Sure all the deep-mouthed dogs of hell
United, yelled that instant out ;
And lo ! the sea, so lately still
As moonlight on a Lapland hill,
Where not a trembling leaf can throw
A shadow on its veil of snow, —
Roars wild, as if the ocean's king
Had loosed that instant every spring,
And demons, bent on wreck and slaughter,
Were tearing up the tortured water.

And lo ! the heavens are robed in gloom,
As if to mourn some planet's doom,
Whose cup being full of wrath and crime,
Awaits alone the doom sublime,
To melt it with the void, from whence
The power that melts, did first condense
It into being, — or to burst
Its mass to fragments, — each accursed ;
As once, the noblest orb that bent
Its way through yon black firmament,
Was shattered from its central base,
And scattered round the realms of space.

Now wild and wilder rolls the ocean,
Uptorn by some internal motion, —
For never yet were billows riven
So fearfully by wind of heaven !
Now rides the demon on the blast,
Shakes the fixed mountain — snaps the mast ;
Now echoes loud the storm fiend's shout, —
Now leaps the living thunders out.
Whiles roaring on its earthward sweep, —
Whiles hissing through the boiling deep, —
Where — where is he, that man of woe ?
Still wandering where the waters flow ;
I would not bide for years of bliss
The naked rage of night like this ;

In vain I strive his steps to trace,
No moonbeam tells his lurking place ;
And though at briefest intervals,
A fire-bolt falls, so quick it falls,
That ere it bares the horrors round,
'T is swallowed in the gloom profound.

Forfend us heaven ! not thine the ray
That lighted then both land and bay.—
The dreadful darkness of the night
Were fairer than such awful light ;
At least, the terrors that ensue,
Were better veiled than bared to view.

On yonder mountain's dizziest peak,
Methinks I see the form I seek.
His strange and flowing robes make known
The wandering stranger — nor alone,—
He stands beside another form, —
'T is his, the fiend that sways the storm, —
I know him by his scowling eye,
Like a red bale-fire in the sky.
I know him by his arm upflung
To guide the whirlwind on its way, —
I know him by the sounds that rung
From hill to valley — land to bay,

What time he roared in summons shrill,
“Be still, ye winds,” — the winds were still!

Yea, 't was so deadly calm around,
As if the whirlwind had unwound
The chain of system as it swept,
And the great pulse of nature slept.
It was a dismal, pulseless pause,
Not recognized in this world's laws ;
A pause that leaves both wave and shore
More hideous than the storm before,
For even that general, breezy sound,
That still pervades the landscape round,
Was silenced by that voice of dread,
As though even nature's self lay dead.

“Loo Tyrrell, mark!” the demon cried,
And forth he loosed a tablet wide, —
“Loo Tyrrell, mark! thy reign is o'er,
This world's a world for thee no more ;
And thy eternity of pain
Shall well repay me for the stain
My pride has suffered in the chase,
By bending to a thing so base.
Loo Tyrrell, mark! the minute's near
My bond is up, — and I am here.”

The wizzard shook not at the sound,
That seemed to shake the mountains round ;
But whirled his wizzard blade on high,
And laughed the while exultingly,
And laughter pealed along the sky,
From viewless forms that hovered nigh ;
Again the fiend commands to cease,
The laughter died, — and all was peace.

Yet not from fear that wizzard proud,
Before the demon's mandate bowed ;
His curling lip, and cutting sneer,
Told more of triumph far than fear ;
Back shrunk the startled fiend amazed,
And at his mystic victim gazed ;
And much he marvelled what might be
The meaning of such revelry ;
He aye had seen in every clime,
The wretch that triumphed in his crime,
When sorrow came, and sin was past,
A coward and a slave at last.

The wizzard spoke ! — Rock, hill and glen,
Gave answer to his voice again,
“ Produce the bond ” —

“ Behold and see ! ”

‘ Not that, cursed fiend, I gave to thee,
Thy scroll is but a forgery.’

The fiend seemed blasted at the sound,
“ A forgery !” — The echoes round,
Were in that shout of horror drowned ;
It seemed as though the essence caught
From every sound with torture fraught,
The echos of each fiendish yell,
That rings amid the roofs of hell,
Were in yon tottering mountain pent,
And that damned shriek had given them vent.

“ Aye, search it well ! no blood of mine
E'er traced a letter, or a line.
I watched my time, — I seized the scroll,
Broke plight and pledge, — freed heart and soul.
The tablet which to thee was given,
Is mingled with the winds of heaven ;
The one on which thou gazest now,
With bursting eye, and burning brow,
Myself inserted in its cell,
When — where, it little boots to tell,
Thy fears portray it all to well.
Another demon claims the power
Which thou hast toiled for many an hour, —
Once more I've sold myself, to be
Unbonded to a wretch like thee.
But still do I the power retain,
That linked thee to the wizzard's chain ; --
The bond thou ne'er shalt see again,

Alone the links of doom could sever,
That makes thee still my slave forever.
And, oh ! if hell can add a curse,
For every wish my soul shall nurse,
Hence forward thro' eternity,
What torments, demon ! wait for thee."

O, what are words the pangs to speak,
Then branded on that demon's cheek, —
That baffled demon as he sprung,
And on the laughing wizzard flung
A look so pregnant with despair,
Hate, — terror, — rage, — all blended there ;
It seemed as though his soul within,
Came flashing on that glance of sin, —
As though the orb that lights the eye,
Imparted then its last supply,
And vengeance, to increase its might,
And give it all its power to blight,
Condensed it from its vast expanse,
And hurled it forth in that wild glance,
Such was that demon's look of dread,
And then his stony orb seemed dead.
Again the wizzard ! —

" Slave accurst !

When I became thy dupe at first,
Ere gulled by pomp, and beauty's brow,
I was — whate'er I am not now, —

Young — happy — innocent, and free,
And yet again the same to be ;—
Again to look with hope sublime,
Thro' the dark mist of unborn time,
I would not barter in exchange,
This instant's thrill of blest revenge.
'T is true I may not cheat the lash,
But perish 'mid the mutual crash ;
My life is verging to its close, —
'T is fluttering now, but ere it flows,
I'll prove my triumph.— Slave, begone !"
'T is done — the stranger stands alone.

But brief his triumph ; from the north
The rested storm comes thundering forth,
Uptearing forests in its sweep, —
Groans the fixed mountain, — roars the deep.
Still high the wizzard on his rock,
Unmindful of the whirlwind's shock,
Shouts to the storm, — "'T is done, 't is done ;
The shaft is sped — my race is run."
While from the heaven a fire bolt then
Severed the tottering rock in twain ;
It thundered down the bellowing hill,
Crashed through the wave, — and all was still.

Yea, all is still, and all is fair,
Nor cloud, nor storm is lingering there ;

The moon is in her age of love,
Silvering the calm blue heavens above ;
And earth and sky are free from sound,
Save the light gush of streamlets round,---
Was all I've heard, and all I've seen
Some phantasy that ne'er has been ?
No, for the hill is naked now,
The rock is gone that crowned its brow ;
But still, to mark that scene of woe,
It points amid the flood below —
But who was he, that man of crime,
Or what his guilt, or where his clime ? --
'T were wrong to ask, — 't were wrong to tell ;
Enough he flourished, and he fell, ---
And still the mountain marks the wave
That rolls above the WIZZARD'S GRAVE.

Hymn to Nature.

Could I embody and unbosom now,
That which is most within me — could I wreak
My thoughts upon expression, and thus throw
Soul, heart, mind, passions, feelings, strong or weak,
All that I would have thought, and all I seek,
Bear, know, feel, and yet breathe — into one word,
And that one word were lightning, I would speak,
But as it is, I live and die unheard,
With a most voiceless thought, sheathing it as a sword.

BYRON.

HYMN TO NATURE.

By Heaven ! a glorious morn, yet am I still
Prone to my abject pallet ; — brooding o'er
The chances, haply of a fancied ill,
That feeds upon reflection ; — I 'll no more,
But mingle with the morning and explore
The wonders of creation : —

Well I knew,
If lurked one canker in my spirit's core,
' T would pass away like friendship — fancy, — dew,
With this eternal flood, and that fair heaven in view.

Oh ! Nature what a wond'rous thing art thou !
Herald, and type, of the Eternal still.
Hail Abba ! Father ! by thy shrine I bow,
To bless thee for my being, and the thrill
Of hope, ambition, love — what e'er I will
To name it, for 't is one, and comes from thee, —
That gushes through my bosom in a rill,
Of rapture, speeding onwards to its sea,
For what are hope, pride, love ? — streams of eternity.

'T is now I feel me not a thing of TIME, —
The grossness of my thoughts hath passed away,
That which must suffer for the primal crime,
Bears no part with my feeling : — death may prey
Upon the cankered heart, no more his sway
Extends to, — would his latest shaft were hurled,
When rising from its chamber of decay,
My soul, with all its dormant thoughts unfurled,
Left for a holier clime, this bleak, benighted world.

Benighted ! no it is a lovely globe,
Bounteous as summer, and as beauty fair ;
Even fancy fails to deck with brighter robe
The load star of the spirit — might I share
A scene like that glowing before me there,
Eternally, and claim it as mine own,
This soul would cease to pant for change of sphere,
But there for aye, unknowing, and unknown,
Revel in wild delight, free, happy, and alone.

There 's scarce a murmur from the south's soft breeze,
There 's scarce an oar upon the silver sea —
And yet the leaves are dancing on the trees,
And the glad waves are laughing in their glee ;
What is it moves them ? — Heaven's soft minstrelsy,
The hum of insects, and the wild birds' lay ;
Or rather 't is an unborn feeling free,

That bounds through all things of a summer's day,
The rapture of the world, for winter passed away.

This world's a living principle and feels
Its being. — Think you that a world like this,
Whose every change an inborn soul reveals,
Hath no perception of its own great bliss ?
That aught so full of life, and beauty, is
Itself a ponderous nothing, — mindless — dead ?
If so methinks your creed is all amiss,
For I believe the living world we tread,
Even as myself a thing, by hope, fear, passion, fed.

Lo! how it looks its gladness in the spring,
And laughs in summer's fulness, rife with mirth ;
When birds, and brooks, and flowers, and every thing,
Proclaim the rapture of the living earth ;
Again when sweeps the storm God's fury forth,
Stripping its bosom of its summer bloom,
'T is not alone the piping winds give birth
To these drear sounds that rise as from the tomb,
Of the young buried flowers, mourning their early
doom.

Ah! no, 't is sorrowing Nature's self that sighs ;
It is the Earth that mourns her bloom's decay,
But Spring's return will come, and flowers will rise,

When Thou—and I—and all ---have passed away;
At least have changed the forms we bear to-day,
For when the frame's deserted by the soul,
It shall not all be changed to senseless clay,
But form, while Nature rules, or planets roll,
A living portion still of the eternal whole.

'T is this that draws the exile's heart to home:
'T is this dear feeling — though we know it not —
That guides our spirits wheresoever we roam,
True to some first loved, consecrated spot,
Even where at length, we wish to rest and rot,
And is it not a hope inspired by God,
When cold at length and by the world forgot, —
To form a portion of one's native clod,
With kindred hearts inurned, — by kindred footsteps
trod?

There is a little church yard by the wave
Of a fair river in an isle of wo;
A pensive schoolboy marked it for his grave,
And now an exile, wandering to and fro,
He would not change, for every joy below,
The blissful hope of mouldering there at last,—
Blow on ye surliest storms of fortune, blow, —
He little recks it, if his lot be cast
To rest by that dear stream, when all your powers
are past.

But hold ! why linger on a selfish theme ?
It recks but little though I 'm blest or curst,
Who am, in this world's greatness, as a dream ?
At best to wake, to be dissolved at worst.
' T is done—each — every grosser thought 's dispersed,
The tug for lucre, and the thirst for praise,
And now I 'm free to glad me in the burst
Of morn, that wraps all nature in a blaze,
And not alone be glad, but worship as I gaze.

Look out into that ocean blushing now,
And paved with golden dimples : — farther still
See where the young sun laves his burning brow
In floods of azure glory ! — round the hill
The fleecy mists hang gathering like a frill,
And now up curling from the earth in scorn,
They soar above their mountain homes, until
In midway heaven they hang, on zephyrs borne,
To form a drapery meet for such a smiling morn.

Still onward, onward cleaves the lord of light,
Bathing the ether with a golden dew ;
There's not an object glittering in his sight
But seems to share his spirit's rapture too ;
One mighty life pervades creation through,
And a sweet murmur from the glancing wings
Of countless insects, glorying in the view

Of such a morn, while every echo rings,
To the lone sky lark's hymn, up soaring as he sings.

There is a sound of gladness every where,
And a rich robe of glory all about :
And wild birds tune their rapture in the air,
And brooks, and torrents answer with a shout,
Bees, flowers, and mountains, mingle in the rout,
With hum, and sigh, and echo, --- soft, or shrill :
While the great voice of Nature rules throughout,
Forming in all — though wild as freedom still —
A melody beyond the reach of music's skill.

O ! that I still were blessed as now I 'm blest :
Were still as buoyant, and as free to soar :
But soon the sun will take him to his rest,
And then the morrow comes, — when I no more
May glory in his glow, — but tug, and bore,
' Mid the hot city's whirl — and all for what ?
Even that which dregs our nature to its core ;
Which makes a monarch of the wealthy sot,
But scarce affords a crust to cheer the poor man's lot.

Then let my spirit triumph while it may,
Ere yet my fate has robbed me of the power ;
Wake heart, wake soul, — unclogged by your decay,
And revel in the rapture of this hour.

The storms of life, alas ! too soon will lour, —
Then why anticipate them ? — no, boy — no !
All bliss is like the beauty of a flower,
As bright, and brief : then since it must be so,
This hour I 'll give to bliss, nor fear to-morrow's wo.

But lo ! the day is lowering cold and dim, —
How have I chimed my numbers, dong-ding-dong.
The red sun whispers from the ocean's brim,
That I 've been singing to him all day long ;
And if the verse be weak, the thoughts were strong
It should have mirrored ; — for a holier flame
Never gave impulse to a child of song,
So should the world account it rude or tame,
The muse is faultless all — the bard is all to blame.

Now mid the darkening rocks I leave my lyre ;
A week of sorrow must roll on from this,*
Till next I wake an echo from its wire,
And feel the greatness of a poet's bliss.
Now my heart reels as from a precipice,
Gone is each charm that held its hopes in thrall,
Before me yawns the future's black abyss,
Gloomy as midnight round a murderer's pall
And now the curtain sinks — and now — 't is silence
all.

* Written Sunday, July, 1833.



The Origin of Bacchus.



THE ORIGIN OF BACCHUS.

A FUNNY old man, with a jolly red nose,
Who was fond of a little drop “under the rose,”
And a thousand things more that were nearly as bad
Once lived in the city of Ballinafad.

But it chanced on a day—’t was a Sunday no doubt,
When the shops were all shut where they dealt in
“brown stout,”
(For his flaggon stood empty from morning till night)
That he fell in a passion, and died out of spite.

Now a bottle of whiskey, the best to be found,
They put into his coffin to make him sleep sound,
For they knew very well, with a quart of the best,
That he ’d be quite content, though shut up in a chest.

Set down in the centre of “Dammany Hall,”
He pockets his bottle and bows to them all,
Asks the judge for a rummer, of half-and-half grog,
And gets kicked into —— like a stone in a bog.

Then up comes old Fum in a deuce of a stew,
So he whips out his bottle and soon made him blue,
And before he was cured of that fearful carouse,
He had scarcely a well-behaved fiend in the house.

Tom Nipshanks, Jack Firedrake, and fifty fiends
more,
Were all singing "Bravo, put it down to the score,"
While one Paddy O'Burnem, and Sawney Mac
Fume,
Were both dancing a jig in the midst of the room.

Now start not ye sons of the Shamrock so green,
And start not ye clans of the Thistle so keen, [air,
For where'er yo may roam, through earth, ocean, or
You will still find a Scotch and an Irishman there.

For the one runs away from his bayonets and duns,
All the comforts he'd find in the home that he shuns,
While the other, God wot, has no thought when he
goes,
But to search for some barley to thicken his "brose."

Then their horns how they rattled — their hoofs how
they rang,
As they laughed, drank, and whistled, — cursed ca-
pered, and sang,

While as chairman aloof, and as fresh as a rose,
Sat that funny old man, and his jolly red nose.

O then, what did the prisoners ? but need you inquire, —

Why they first took a drop, and then put out the fire,
While the imps in their moment of freedom and play,

Flung their prongs at the devil, and scampered away.

For a year and a day, as their bulletins tell,

There was nothing like decent behavior in —,

For the highest — the lowest ; — prince — demon —
and sprite —

Were sick every morning, and drunk every night.

Now that bottle of bottles, ere this had run dry,

But that Vulcan, who lov'd an odd glass on the sly,

When his lady was off with her gallants in town,

Fix'd a spring at the bottom of pure " Derry Down."

So at length he got saving, and open'd a tap,

And grew saucy, and fat, did this funny old chap,

For their fiendships below, or their godships atop,

Could n't sit, stand, or walk, but they'd long for a
drop.

And at times he'd give tick, and at times he'd refuse,
And he took in deposits whenever he chose,
Till his cabin was fill'd with all comical things,
Horns and tails of young devils, and jolly gods' wings.

But at length the affair came to Jupiter's ear,
Who was sick of raw water, and black berry beer ;
So without more ado, he sends off for the flask, [cask.
For he thought that his word might have passed for a

Says the man, "I've come down from the top of the
hill,

For your flask for my lord" — "Where's your money?" says Bill.—

"O the money, that's nothing, — we thought you gave trust." —

"No I do n't, 'pon my soul !" — "Then I'm d——d but you must."

O't was then that bold Irishman looked very glum,
As he seized on the tongs with his finger and thumb,
And before there was time to escape through the door,
He laid Mercury heels over head on the floor.

But he jumped to his feet — brushed the dirt from
his wings — [slings,
Blew a mort for his troops with their arrows and

While old Pluto rushed out — called his men from
their work,
And they met with a roar that was heard in New
York.

Now the battle was long, and the battle was hot,
And poor Pluto was kilt with an empty quart pot,
While Dan Mars in the onset was floored like a
whale,
By a slap in the face from Tom Belzebub's tail.

Now they all began flagging, when Billy cries "stop,"
And filled up every devil a glass to the top.
At the sight of the "native," their spirit revives,
So they thrashed the poor gods till they begged for
their lives.

Then up speaks one Apollo, a shrewd witted God,
And he seconds his speech with a wink and a nod,
"After all that is past, we could lick 'em like sacks,
If that chap with the bottle would stand to our backs.

So he steps up to Bill, and says he, with a leer,
"'Tis a mighty dark place that you 're living in
here,
And the more it's the shame, for the son of your dad,
For you came of good people in Ballinafad.

“But come, pack up your traps, for Elysium with me,
And I'll give you the half of my cabin rent free;
And we've girls in 'galore,' for you know very well
That we never send any young ladies to ——.”

Now his business of late, had been only so so,
For the half of the devils were bankrupts below;
And old Horny himself owed five shillings, or more,
And the chance was but slim of his quitting the
score.

So the blarney subdued, and the cabin scot lot,
Made him turn round as sharp as an eel in a pot;
But the thought of the girls put an end to the strife,
For he cried, “Lead the way, I'm your servant for
life.”

O! how shall your poet presume for to sing,
How the demon turned tail, when he cut with their
spring,
All the gods, how they fought, with “a drop in their
eye,”
Whipped the foe in a crack, and set off to the sky.

Then, Jupiter, then, 't was yourself that looked big,
As you clutched that black bottle, and took a long
swig,

And swore by your sceptre, "'t was all very true,
That the nectar of nectars was 'Inishow'n dew.' "

As for Juno, she hung'down her head, and said "fie !"
But that night there were mighty strange things in
her eye,

And she lectured poor Jove —sang " The guager 's in
town," —

She had been to the bottle, I 'd wager a crown.

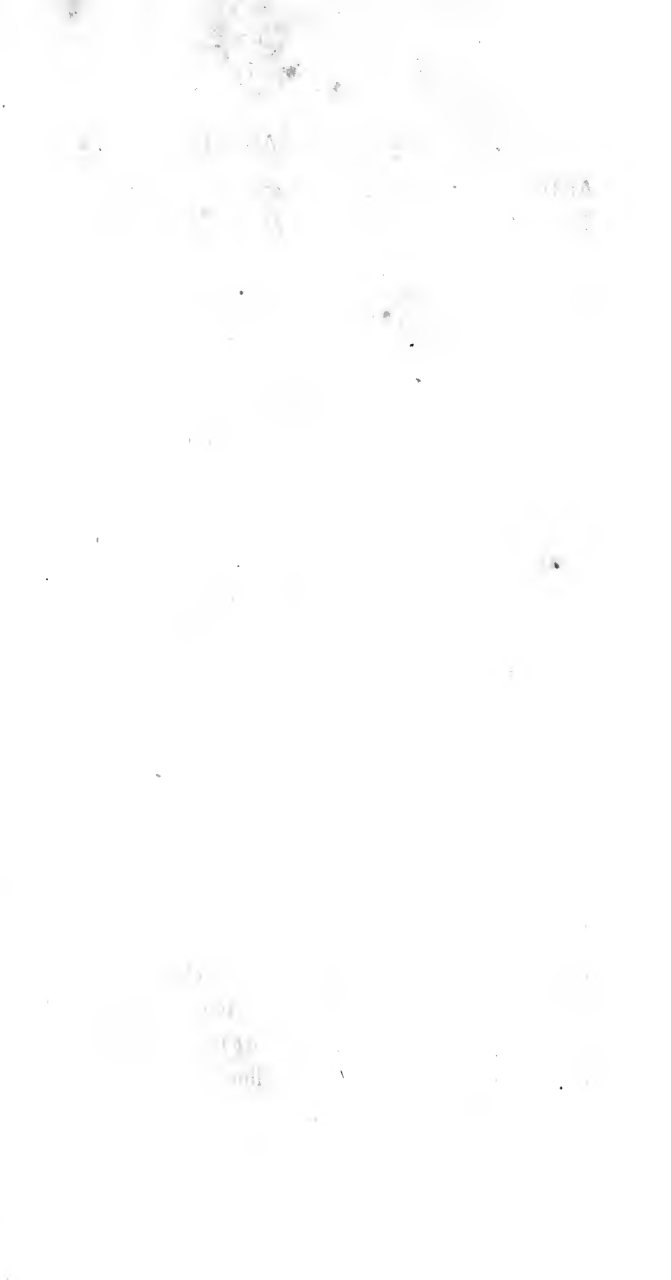
O then who like the man with the big bellied quart ?
And O, whose was the house of such constant resort ?
For the ladies proclaimed him purveyor-in-chief,
So their husbands grew jealous, and drank to kill
grief.

And they christened him Bacchus, — and why ? ---
if you *ax*,

But because of the day that he stood to their backs,
When they leathered the rogues in the kitchen like
sacks,

And ran off with mine host, and his bottle of max.

So you see 't is as plain as the sun in the sky,
Or the nose on your face, or the smile in your eye,
That the jolly god, Bacchus, who drove them all mad,
Was one Billy O'Thunder from Ballinafad.



Miscellanies.

— " 'T is a consummation
Devoutly to be wished — to die, to sleep."

A MONODY.

HEAVENS! what an inconsistency is here!
They starve him first, then weep around his bier!
'T were surely better, ere his spirit fled,
Had those who mourn him, joined to buy him bread.

And yet 't was best to wither in his strength,
Than after years of fading, fade at length;
If death must follow still, when life is past,
Then death is all that life attains at last;
So, little boots it, whether fell the blow
Or yesterday, or twenty years ago.
When forward to some destined goal we bend,
We languish still to see our journey's end;
No velvet bank, nor pathway strewn with flowers,
Bear such sweet aspect as the promised bowers;
Then why prefer life's rugged track unblest,
To death's sweet solace, and a grave of rest?

Say, thou of reverend beard, and faltering tongue,
What has he lost by leaving life so young?

What hast thou gained by living? wouldst thou say,
The glorious privilege of long decay!
To cling like thee to life, till it had grown,
Like thine, the plague of others, and its own;
Till the warm heart of youth, matured by age,
Became the seat of hate — suspicion — rage —
Low cunning — deep mistrust — guile — envy —
 fraud, —
All — all that angels scorn, and demons laud.

I do not say that aught in his young breast
 Was ominous of evil, but the whips
Of villains would have torn it, and its best
 And highest hopes been palled in the eclipse
Of envy — hatred — malice — misery — all
 That man can tender to his fellow who
Is marked from out the world's polluting thrall
 By some high curse of heaven! The charge is true,
For where is he, whose bosom's every burst
 Is magnetized by glory, proof to woe?
And where the wretch, with towering genius curst,
 That ever realized a hope below?
But this is justice! he that life would spurn,
Can hope for nothing but a like return!

Not so the plodding fool, whose nature's bent
Is earthward, and earth's wiles his element;

His mother knows, and soothes him from his birth,
Hope — soul — thought — passion — all, belong to
earth ;

He bows his breast to every sweep of fate
That leaves the loftier bosom desolate ;
His is the nature of the toads that lie
In life secure, where nobler things must die ;
He is the slavish weed that scapes the blast,
Which tears the forest's monarch, and at last,
So true his grovelling instinct worms its way,
That spite of heaven's intent, he grasps at power,
And loftiest spirits bend beneath the sway
Of one, whose cunning is his only dower,
And thus do souls of purest innocence
Become degraded in their own defence,
Thus play the hound, and wallow in the dust,
That knaves may smile, and life may have its crust.

But thou, my boy ! ere tyranny or time
Had warped thy nobler feelings into crime,
Wert called to blossom in that blissful sphere
Thy glowing soul anticipated here ;
Thy heart soon felt the barb of sorrow's sting,
Shrunk at its touch, and perished with a spring ;
Thine was a brief, but enviable doom ;
Like a young sorbos, blasted in its bloom,

Ere wood-man's axe, or Time's corroding air,
Had sapped its trunk, or left its branches bare.

* * * * *

How calm he looks upon his lowly bier,
And yet, oh God ! I fain would have him here,
Again to weep, --- again to act his part,
The fangs of famine tugging at his heart !
Rebellious nature still would burst the grave,
And spite of pity, and of reason, save ;
Would hurl a dagger at each heart of clay,
That drove my best, my sweetest friend away.
Lo ! how they gather round his throne of peace,
With noisy dole ! --- Ye canting villians ! cease,
Dash off the foul pretender from each brow,
His haughty soul would spurn your homage now.
Lo ! see the wretched victim of neglect
Whose will to please you was his chief defect ;
Behold the trappings of his chamber base,
The furrows of his meek, but fleshless face,
The scant and vile chaff pallet where he lies,
And then confess the mockery of your sighs ;
These were your gifts before his soul was sped !
Your tears --- an equal prize --- you give the dead !

* * * * *

The train moved on --- they stood beside his lair ---
And all was ended by a hireling prayer !

Not such, as leaves the soul for friends that die,
And yet the best that parson's fees can buy !
Now dry your tears, and leave my boy to rot,
His soul rejects --- his frame requires them not ;
Cold, cold within its urn, at rest and safe,
Tears cannot soothe it now, nor curses chafe.

Now spade and mattock to your labors go,
And shape the grave, and hurl the clod below ;
Come here, ye whiners --- ye who scorned to save,
And wrap the mantle round your victim's grave ---
His couch of rapture rather, for 't is sweet,
When broken hearts and dreamless slumbers meet ;
On either hand, his ransomed soul is blest,
With heaven eternal, or eternal rest ;
For 't is a riddle, half resolved at best,
But brief the doubt, and all shall prove the test ;
A few short years, and we around him met,
Shall be the graves of some that are not yet.

* * * *

Cold hearts were gathered round him when the dead
Was laid for ever in his lowly bed.
Aye, some were there --- but O ! they never felt
A kindred sympathy with souls that melt
To pity, when they see this world's decay
Bear all that's loftiest and best away ;

Who in his hour of pain applied no art
To lift one canker from his withering heart, —
Who, at his soul's departure, came not nigh
To close the lashes of the dead man's eye!

Even now the starting tears mine eyes bedim,
But stranger, tho' I mourn, 't is not for him;
Why should I weep for innocence at rest?
Or wish him hither, when I know he's blest?
My tears are selfish all, for they are shed,
That I am living — not that he is dead.

SUMMER.

Dear woman is ever my study — my pilot, wherever I rove,
Be life's atmosphere pleasant or moddy, I'm always ten fathoms in love.

THE ROVER.

Lo! the blushing heaven inspired,
The primal dawn of May discloses, --
See the seasons' Queen attired,
With robe of light and wreath of roses;
Hark! the woods with music ring,
Echo, every note encoring,
While the sky lark on the wing,
The rapture of his soul is pouring;
Nymph of beauty — buds — and bowers,
Delightful, wild, but gloomy never —
What a world of bliss were ours,
Could we secure thy smiles for ever.

Tired of winter's cheerless gloom,
That long in stony glades confined them,
Ladies seek the garden's bloom,
And leave the smoky town behind them;
Eyes no more are sunk and dull,
Lips and cheeks, decayed or tainted,
All is bright and beautiful,
I'll swear — by heaven! the maids are painted!
Yes, believe me, Health supplies
The tints from Nature and the Graces;

Love prepares the rosy dyes,
And strews them o'er his votaries' faces.

See on yonder fountain's side,
A group of lovely girls advancing,
Every brow with beauty dyed,
And every eye with laughter glancing.
Hand in hand, they glide along,
All light as if no cares had bound them,
Dancing to the wild bird's song,
That floats on every breeze around them,
Woman — lovely woman — thou
Art hope's chief heaven — so pure — so blooming,—
Leafless be the minstrel's brow,
That taints the fame of lovely woman.

And as the breeze their light scarfs swing,
Each seems to every rapt beholder,
Graceful as a spangled wing
Suspended from an angel's shoulder;
Now the dance is o'er, and they,
Upon that streamlet's bank reclining,
Woo the winds that round them play,
Or watch their shades beneath them shining;
And O! if brightest things had power
To fascinate the eye for ever,

They who gazed that witching hour,
Had never left that lovely river.

Said one bright girl, "How fair we look;
I fear 't is but some 'flattering error,'
Sure there 's something in the brook
Like Semele's deceiving mirror;"
Young Sue replied, in tone of woe,
Which all betrayed her soul's dejection,
"Thine is true, but mine — Ah! no,
I'm not so fair as my reflection,"
The while she spoke, a tear-fraught sigh
Escaped, her dark blue eye adorning;
Tears become a maiden's eye,
As mountain mists the light of morning.

The day retires — the sunbeams sink,
And Night extends her darkening fingers;
But still along the ocean's brink
A last red ray of glory lingers:
'T is gone — but yonder sun-cloud light,
Proclaims — perchance, to cheer your sorrow,
That he who sets in smiles tonight,
Will rise again in smiles tomorrow;
Now Cynthia sheds her silver showers
Those gentle maids who felt the warning,
By her light regained their bowers, —
And so — Dear Girls, adieu till morning,
w*

ADAM AND EVE.

“ A thing beyond all praise.” PRIOR.

Who can reproach thee, Adam, with the crime
That drove thee forth from Eden, if the brow
Of her who wooed, and sued thee at the time,
Was heavenly as the record beaming now
From out the web before me? and if thou
Wert such as I am, thy impotent son,
Forc'd (reckless, fame — hope — reason — heaven,)
— to bow,
When beauty claims her dower — believe me — one
Who placed, as thou wert placed, had done as thou
hast done.

O thou! O thou! whose spirit's sight could peer
Into the heaven of beauty, and draw forth
Such lips — and eyes — and soul, as we have here,
Again to pout — and beam — and burn on earth, —
Say, are they truly of immortal birth,
Or born within thy bosom? if the last,
I cannot find a word to speak thy worth,
But whichsoe'er they are, alike thou hast
The tribute of my heart, where'er thy home be cast.

Perchance by Chindera's breathing fount he lay,
Sketching the glories of the mystic spring ;
When the young Queen of Music came the way,
And bared her beauties to his penciling.
For O ! there 's music in them — and to sing
Their sovereign triumph o'er the soul, should be
The task of some born monarch of the string !
Whose tongue could utter what his eye might see,
Weaving his glowing song from that rich drapery.

Milton has sung that of the heavenly race
Of women, Eve was heavenliest — true to this
There is a glory in that imag'd face
Unknown to ——— Mercy ! — I have sang amiss —
But let it go — that peerless brow to kiss,
Were it invested with a soul as fair,
Man might forego th' anticipated bliss
Of fifty Edens, for a world of care,
Yea, heaven itself were such, to light his exile there.

And see the sire of our degenerate race,
Looking, as he should look before the fall,
Proud of his hopes, his home, and form of grace,
But prouder of his lady far than all.
His very pride bespeaks his spirit's thrall,
And woman all triumphant — still his eye
Looks wav'ringly to heaven — perchance to call

His God's assistance down — and now that sigh,—
The very canvass breathes — 't is done — hope —
heaven — good bye.

Now turn we to the hour, when sin first flung
Her blight around creation — up my soul !
Mount on the storm which tears that scene among,
Proclaiming man's disgrace, and nature's dole —
Hark ! how the lightnings hiss — the thunders
roll —

The wounded pine tree groans, uptorn and rent,
The infant whirlwind rushes from its goal,
Curling the startled waters in its bent,
And all is storm, and gloom, and light, and beauty
blent.

And see the tawny monarch of the wood,
Claiming the sovereignty, which after time
Award to his desendants. Lo ! the flood,
Adding its terrors to that hour of crime ---
Storm, flood, and thunder, meet in war sublime,
Hurling confusion round them --- Earth groans out,
Mourning the havoc of her harvest prime,
The torrent meets the ocean with a shout, ---
Hills totter --- mountains burst --- and horror reigns
throughout.

But what is nature's bustle ? — what the war
Of floods and whirlwinds — all that tongue can tell,
There 's something more tremendous — deadlier far,
In the blanched cheek — strained eye, and torturing
swell

Of Adam, on the moment that he fell,
O Heaven ! what hand could trace such wild despair?
The look is worthy of the loss, though hell
Had closed on him that moment, and laid bare
The ills of after time piled up in mountains there.

But still there is one feeling lingering yet
Of former joy -- 't is love for her who kneels
In ruin at his feet — their eyes have met
In love's despair, and that wild glance reveals
What each conceives and dreads, and hopes, and
feels.

She looks alone to him for hope — and he,
Reckless of the wild whirl that round him reels,
And reckless of its cause, too, bends his knee,
Losing each other thought in his love's agony.

But this is not a picture — 't is the life,
Leaping about the canvass — every track
Proclaims some novelty, with action rife,
Waters that lash and roar — the whirlwind's rack :
Hark ! hear ye not the rocking pine tree crack,

Split by a fire shaft in its sweep of pride,
Lo, see the light kindling the lion's back,
Gilding the forms of Adam and his bride :
And baring rage, and storm, and life, on every side.

Note.—THE two paintings of Adam and Eve in Paradise, one representing them in a state of innocence, the other, the moment after the committal of their first crime, are, to our taste, the most glorious specimens of this noble art that we ever beheld. They were painted by De Bouff, a French artist. If the countenance of the Venus De Medicis be as beautiful as that of Eve, as she appears in the first, the highest of the encomiums bestowed upon it, have been very justly deserved ; the other is a most glorious picture of all that is sublime and horrible in the war of elements, and the intensity of despair portrayed on the visages of Adam and his bride, at the instant of their ruin, is most truly in accordance with the misery of their situation.

ELEGY ON SIR WALTER SCOTT.

If those be right whose creeds deny
The spirit's immortality —
Who yearn not for a nobler sphere —
Heavens! what a wreck of soul is here!

And is our noblest, mightiest one,
Into eternal chaos gone?
He who sublimely, and alone
Was known by all, yet curst by none!
Whose matchless skill in every art,
That fires the soul, and wraps the heart,
Was never made the bright disguise
Of thoughts, designed to victimise.

'T is true, what ever death may crave,
Is laid at rest in mound or wave;
'T is true the knight that conquered more
Than even his own brave knights of yore,
Has laid in his lowly cell,
And more of fame than ever fell
To chieftain's or to monarch's lot,
Proclaims the grave of Walter Scott;

For those at best, with single sword,
Have battled with some untrained horde ;
Or won their bays from menial crowd,
While all the world to him has bowed.
'T is true, that having given to fame
As deathless and as fair a name
As ever graced a minstrel's rhyme,
He 's ta'en him to his sleep of time ;
The heart that pored — the head that planned,
Are dark and throbless, and the hand
That wove their magic with the lay,
Cold — cold, and gauntleted in the clay !

The minstrel's last sweet note is sung,---
The minstrel's last sad knell is rung,---
For Harrold's --- Rokeby's - - Marmion's bard,
Has changed his bower for chapel yard ;
The bard of Scotland's feudal time. ---
Her castled craigs, and wilds sublime,
And galliards stout and gentle dames,
Now slumbers with his " James Fitz James."

But still 't were wrong --- 't were wild to say,
The mind is mouldering with the clay,
That such a boundless world of mind
Is wasted on the desert wind ;
That he, whose more than human skill,
Could mould all feelings to his will ;

Could wake the bosom's merriest glow,
Or chain it in a wreath of wo
(For even his words of wildest grief,
Were twined with flowers, to give relief),
Has left no scion, but a name,
To glory in his deathless fame.

Till the spent bosom of the earth
Has given its latest spring flowers birth ;
Till all the glorious world around
Is mingled with the void profound ;
Till time that frees, or holds in thrall,
That makes, and mars, and levels all,
With indisputable decree,
Is grafted in eternity, —
Love — Honor — Fame — shall mark the spot
Where sleeps the dust of WALTER SCOTT.

Up, minstrels, up ! — of every clime,
Where lives the wizzard in his rhyme ;
Up, Campbell, up ! — though hope be gone,
Shall " Hope's " own bard look silent on ?
Up, Rogers ! — he can ill refuse
The tribute, that is " Memory's " muse !
And thou, the latest left behind,
Of the three master sons of mind ;

For those at best, with single sword,
Have battled with some untrained horde ;
Or won their bays from menial crowd,
While all the world to him has bowed.
'T is true, that having given to fame
As deathless and as fair a name
As ever graced a minstrel's rhyme,
He 's ta'en him to his sleep of time ;
The heart that pored — the head that planned,
Are dark and throbless, and the hand
That wove their magic with the lay,
Cold — cold, and gauntleted in the clay !

The minstrel's last sweet note is sung,---
The minstrel's last sad knell is rung,---
For Harrold's --- Rokeby's - - Marmion's bard,
Has changed his bower for chapel yard ;
The bard of Scotland's feudal time. ---
Her castled craigs, and wilds sublime,
And galliards stout and gentle dames,
Now slumbers with his " James Fitz James."

But still 't were wrong --- 't were wild to say,
The mind is mouldering with the clay,
That such a boundless world of mind
Is wasted on the desert wind ;
That he, whose more than human skill,
Could mould all feelings to his will ;

Could wake the bosom's merriest glow,
Or chain it in a wreath of wo
(For even his words of wildest grief,
Were twined with flowers, to give relief),
Has left no scion, but a name,
To glory in his deathless fame.

Till the spent bosom of the earth
Has given its latest spring flowers birth;
Till all the glorious world around
Is mingled with the void profound;
Till time that frees, or holds in thrall,
That makes, and mars, and levels all,
With indisputable decree,
Is grafted in eternity, —
Love — Honor — Fame — shall mark the spot
Where sleeps the dust of WALTER SCOTT.

Up, minstrels, up! — of every clime,
Where lives the wizzard in his rhyme;
Up, Campbell, up! — though hope be gone,
Shall "Hope's" own bard look silent on?
Up, Rogers! — he can ill refuse
The tribute, that is "Memory's" muse!
And thou, the latest left behind,
Of the three master sons of mind;

For Byron — Scott — and Moore, shall long
Be known the three compeers of song ;—
Up, Silver-toned Anacreon !
And mourn a brother minstrel gone.

And oh ! shall gentlest Bryant wrong
The memory of a child of song ?
When such as Scotland's minstrel die,
Can Bryant's harp the boon deny ?
And Halleck, of the niggard lyre,
Come, shake the cobwebs from the wire,
And wake a strain for Walter's urn,
As deathless as your " Robert Burn ;"
Come Woodsworth too, nor shun the call ;
Come Ruin-hearted Percival !
" Come one, come all," in gathered might,
Give each your loftiest fancies flight,
And sing Sir Walter's " last good night."

New York, Nov. 10, 1832.

THE POET'S RETURN.

MERRILY cleaves the lordly bark
Through the clashing flood, with its crest of snow,
Mingled with many a glancing spark
That shine, like gems, in the wave below ;
O who shall fathom the minstrel's mind,
Standing aloof on the rolling bow,
As his cheek is fanned by the balmy wind,
That blows from the land of his boyhood now.
Long has he poured his lay sublime,
To raptured ears in a distant clime ;
But vain were the plaudits the islands gave,
Still Memory beckoned him o'er the wave ;
So lowly their palaces seemed to be,
To the shrines of the goddess that guards the free ;
Still would his eye in rapture rest
On the golden skies of his native west ;
At length the feelings of days gone by,
Wrought so deep in his spirit's core,
He seeks the land where he'd love to die,
For nature, and hope, could look no more.

The clouds that floated along the sky
Have dissolved in mists, and are gathering round,

Too dense for the search of human eye,
And the land is lost in the dusk profound ;

But still is the bard on the bending boom,
Striving to pierce the gathering haze ;

And what is denied by the clouds that gloom,
Memory gives to his raptured gaze.

Memory tells where such things should be,

And he sees them all as he strives to see ;

The sombre wood, and the daisied hill,

All clad in their own wild beauty still ;

Ah, soon he 'll see with a proud regret,

How scenes are changed since his childhood set.

And soon he 'll see that where 'er we roam,

There 's no home in the world like his own " Sweet
Home."

Now the vessel has neared the land —

Sails are furled, and cables flung ;

Bounds the bard to his native strand,

Not unhonored, and not unsung.

O ! that was a triumph of song indeed,

As we gathered at night in a festive crowd,

To give to our poet a lasting meed,

And to girdle his brows with a garland proud !

For woman was there with her conquering eyes,
And her beauty so dazzled the ring that night,
That our festive hall seemed a paradise,
And every lady an angel bright.
O how happy that wandering bard,
To whom beauty has given such bright reward ;
Little he recks how his hope beguiles,
Thus safe in his rampart of beauty's smiles.
O woman ! dear woman ! if given by thee
The bays of the poet — though poor he be,
Is still more dear, and more lasting far,
Than the wreath of the hero though red with war.
O long may it circle that minstrel's brow,
And long may it bloom when the bard is past,
As a beacon of hope and of glory now, —
As a trophy to hang on his tomb at last.

Note.—Mr. John Howard Payne landed in New York, after an absence of several years, during the summer of 1832. His friends, or, more properly speaking, his fellow citizens, gave him a benefit at the Park Theatre, in which two of his own most popular pieces, *Brutus*, and *Charles the Second*, were enacted. Forrest, Wallack, Kemble and his daughter, the irresistible Fanny, sustaining the chief characters. The crowd that assembled on the occasion must have been most gratifying to the feelings of the principal person concerned; for there was a galaxy of such

lovely women present, that we could not help exclaiming
with the author of the " Veiled Prophet," —

—— "That the same lips and eyes
They wear on earth, will serve in paradise."

THE DEATH OF THE LITTLE BIRD.

THE sun above the smiling world
In silver glory rose,
And wakened flowers, their leaves unfurled,
Fresh from their late repose ; —
That hour I left my chamber's gloom
And sought the upland free,
And thought in such a world of bloom
How happy man should be.

A little bird sat on a thorn,
And Oh ! I never heard,
For many a day, until that morn,
So sweet a little bird.
His bower was sheltered from the breeze
That softly sighed along,
So, well I knew the tiny trees
Were dancing to his song.

'T was sweet — that little songster's smile,
And bright his spangled plume, —
And Oh ! his joyous heart the while
Was bounding in its bloom.

He loosed his fair and fairy wings
 And left his native spray,
 But still the tiny forest rings
 Responsive to his lay.

Now, high in air his song is heard,
 But still the echoes rang,
 And then I blessed that little bird,
 So beautifully he sang.
 But as he sang, a ruffian gun
 Was levelled at his head,
 And ere his last sweet note was done,
 That little bird was dead!

He fell beneath his own fair tree, —
 Among whose branches oft
 He poured his soul in minstrelsy,
 So beautiful and soft;
 And as I gazed, that gloomy hour,
 Upon the warbler slain,
 I would have given my fortune's dower
 To hear him sing again.

LOVE, OR AN HONEST EPISTLE,

FROM A POET TO HIS MISTRESS.

FAREWELL to thee, Ellen, for O dearest maiden,
Ere this you receive, we forever have parted :
In sooth, if your town I had longer delay'd in,
I'd leave it with thee, love, or go broken hearted ;
But just ere the fetters, the wily god wove,
Were entwin'd round my soul too resistless to sever,
Dame Reason step in with a lecture on love,
So I slipp'd thro' the links and absconded forever.

But deem my affection nor light — nor untrue —
For time cannot alter, nor circumstance mar it ;
There's none, my dear girl, I love better than you —
But how would you like to be starv'd in a garret ?
In short, I 've been musing on love and his laws,
And would follow his track tho' it led to destruction,
Could we fatten, like Bruin, by chewing our paws,
Or live, my dear Nelly, like woodcocks, by suction.

That our tribe should be poor, as our visions are bright
Is a changeless resolve of the muses intended,

Lest the weight of our pockets should cumber our
flight,

For the fav'rites of mammon have seldom ascended,
And yet when I think of my Nelly so kind,

I can envy the care hunting, earth-fetter'd block-
heads,

For O, to make up for the feast of the mind,

If they 've lead in their heads, they have gold in
their pockets.

O heed not the world, should it say that my heart

Is more false than the moon, or the wave, or the
weather ;

Let it rail as it will — to be eating apart

Is better, believe me, than starving together.

So fare thee well, Ellen, my bark's in the bay,

But still there's a solace in store for our sorrow :

For I can put up with my loss of today,

And you can get plenty of lovers tomorrow.

WAR SONG OF THE GREEK.

WHY slumber our swords in their scabbards tonight ?
Even the instinct of vengeance will serve us for light ;
Not the slouch hound that tracks us, is truer of scent
Than the instinct that leads to the infidel's tent.

Shall the infidel dance by the flame of our fanes,
While there's death on our falchions — or life in our
veins ?

O no ! — by the altars of Him we adore,
We will perish, or quench them in infidel's gore.

We pant not for honor — such honor as springs
From the hatred of nations — the envy of kings ;
But our altars — our homes — and our liberties lie
In the track of the despot — that despot is nigh.

Hark ! hear ye their timbrels — our tyrants have met
To rejoice at the sun of our liberty set :
Have we chance for a choice ? — are we renegades ?
No —

Then, thus onward to ruin — to glory we go .

They rush'd to the battle like foam on the flood,
And they storm'd the Turk's tent, and they drank
the Turk's blood ;
And their war shout rose high mid the infidel's yell,
As they charged, wheeled and rallied—and triumph'd
and fell.

STANZAS

INSCRIBED TO R. B.

'T is well the world's at variance! — well the heart
Has fits of desolation to alloy it;
For were it one wide, calm, and cloudless mart
Of pleasure, who alas! could e'er enjoy it?
All human gladness has its gloomy part,
Which serves to brighten, rather than to cloy it,
Joy deadens in the lapse, while grief and trouble
Improve the zest, and make the pleasure double.

And Oh! the highest, heavenliest gift of Heaven,
Love filtered of its phrenzy, FRIENDSHIP, who
Amid a world so passionless and even
Had known thee? — none! — the happy never do;
The heart must be unhinged, and bowed, and riven,
And spurned by all mankind, save one or two,
Who, as the dark'ning ruin that impends
Around us totters, fly not — these are FRIENDS.

Even such is he, for whom the muse tonight,
Would fain the wreath of deathless song entwine,
Not as a snare to lure the rich man's mite!
Not as a sacrifice to Mammon's shrine;

By heaven! no feeling aids her in her flight,
From which to wring one mercenary line;
No, heavenly muse! contented with our bays,
We seek no tribute but a smile of praise.

Oh! were his power as boundless as his mind,
There's not a plague-spot in the world but then
His bounty had pervaded like the wind,
Such is his feeling towards his fellow men;
'T is pity power so free, should be confined —
He gives and suffers, yet he gives again,
Unswayed by worldly reasons, rules, and tacts,
Even as his nature prompts him, so he acts.

Oh! what destruction to the nobler springs
Of nature, yet how moulded with our clay,
That cold economy, which ever flings
Its finger forward to a darker day —
Thus smothering mercy, — rending all the strings
Of feeling, as we turn the wretch away
With hunger-smitten eye, and hollow cheek,
Lest we should want the boon he craves — next
week.

Some men there are, so mark'd amid the crowd,
By hope — soul — passion — feeling — brightly
blent;

They seem; designed alone, for stations proud,
The beacons of the world — whom Nature meant
For monarchs ! till Corruption's minions bowed
The minds of men and baffled her intent ;
Thus kings are oft impotent, lowly things —
Thus humbler men betimes seemed formed for kings.

O thou ! O thou ! so high amid the best,
Whose crimes lie only in their lack of power ;
A monarch's heart is bounding in thy breast —
Would it were coupled with a monarch's dower !
Long be the number of thy days — if blest —
Bright be the visions of thy latest hour,
Those blissful scenes so dear to dying eyes,
The fluttering spirit pants to realise.

And when that thou art dead — and when the clod
That claims our ruined tenements, hath clung
Around thee, wedded to thy parent sod,
Thy dole shall long from many a heart be wrung ;
Thou canst not go unhonored to thy God,
Breathes *one* lorn harp, thou shalt not go unsung ;
And Oh ! if life hath one redeeming bliss,
'T is in the hope of such a death as this.

THE POET'S GRAVE.

No home had he, the mountain brown
His lone and lowly couch supplied,
And not a star from heaven looked down,
What time the wandering minstrel died ;
Upon that hill
He slumbers still,
No sculptured urn records the spot,
But pity's tear
Bedewed his bier,
For strangers mourned, that knew him not.

Whence came that minstrel ? — from a clime
Far distant o'er the dark blue sea,
Where freedom was so wild a crime,
That none but outlaws dared be free,
A felon band
Laid waste the land,
Her slaves were bought — her freemen bled,
That minstrel's songs
Proclaimed her wrongs,
His sword avenged them — and he fled.

His country now his home no more,
Dejected, heartless, and alone,
He sought upon a distant shore,
For that denied him in his own.

His fortunes fled,
Ambition dead,
Himself a heartless wanderer, driven,
Without a ray
To cheer his way,
Without a friend — a hope, but heaven.

Lament — lament, ye sons of song,
And chaunt your dirge notes round his grave,
There fell a brother of your throng,
To famine, and to grief a slave,
Yet why lament,
He died content,
No lingering look to life he cast,
His hours were rife
With grief and strife,
But there in peace he sleeps at last.

STANZAS.

DEAD! — dead! — ah no! in mercy say not dead! —
Or charge the word with lightning — come despair!
Her marble cheek proclaims her spirit fled, —
Her glassy eye, that soul is wanting there.

Oh! tell me not of patience — can it burst
The links of memory, or the life restore?
Or realize the hope my soul has nursed?
You answer no — then strive to soothe no more.

Can this be Lucia? — fondly would I trace
The soul that danc'd like sunbeams on her brow;
But all is dark along that frozen face;
O misery — misery, where is Lucia now?

I knew I loved you, Lucia — but before
I never felt the power that word implied;
I knew 't was wedded to my spirit's core,
But never felt how deeply till you died.

Desist ye slaves! 't were treason to your race,
To heap corruption on her form of bloom;
The grave may suit the sinful and the base;
A bower were fitter for my Lucia's tomb.

TOWN AND COUNTRY.

O LEAVE the gloomy city
For the mountain and the vale,
Where the ploughman trolls his ditty,
And the flowers perfume the gale.
Aye brooding o'er thy treasures
Like the Gnome that guards a mine,
O how lofty are my pleasures
When comparisond with thine.

Thou hast never roamed the mountain
With a pointer and a gun,
Or reclined thee by a fountain
Partly shaded from the sun ;
Where the golden gleams that shiver
Through the glancing branches high,
Fall in showers upon the river
As it rolls in music by.

Thou hast never haply wandered
With the lady of thy love,
Where the glassy brook meandered
Through a lonely sunlit grove,

Where the branches darkly wreathing,
Bared the beauty of her eyes,
And the flowers around thee breathing
Gave their incense to her sighs.

And O! the bliss of blisses,
Thou hast never roamed the tide
In a shallop built for kisses,
With that lady there beside ;
Believe me, such a minute
On the lonely laughing foam,
Hath a trill of rapture in it,
Worth an age of bliss at home.

Then come to where the heather
Spreads her mantle on the hill,
And we 'll roam the wilds together,
Or we 'll rest beside the rill,—
And we 'll spurn the canker glooming
On thy wrinkled visage now,
Till the brightest roses blooming
Shall be mirrored in thy brow.

THE BONNY BRUNETTE.

O TALK not to me of her bosom of snow,
And her tresses of auburn so fair,
Give me the brown girl, with a bright sunny glow,
And a cluster of glossy black hair.

O talk not to me of her seraph blue eye,
So mild — so unchangingly bright ;
My Laura's are black, but their quick flashes fly
In mixtures of darkness and light.

Now veiling their glories behind the dark lash,
In the home of their lustre they roll :
Now gilding her face, with a warm sunny flash,
Till her brow seems the seat of her soul.

O ! the noontide of summer is dazzling to see,
In its shadowless lustre profound ;
But the glory of sunset is dearer to me,
With its purple clouds floating around.

O ! there's something too still, too unchangingly
bright
In the calm of the shadowless blue,

While sunset still hovers, 'twixt shadow and light,
For ever unceasing and new.

Thus Chlœ, is fair as the summer day morn,
And cloudless, and tranquil, — but yet
There is something more dear in the shades that
adorn
The cheeks of my Bonny Brunette.

SERENADE.

O COME to me, Mary, or let but the light
Of your countenance gleam from the lattice tonight ;
Even the moonbeams fall heavy and dim to mine
 eyes,
As they watch for the star of their worship to rise.

Yet so rich is the heaven in its purple profound,
And so brilliant the landscape that's laughing around,
It would seem tho' each planet that wanders on
 high,
Was dissolved, and suffused over landscape and sky.

But you know, my dear Mary, that lovers are blind,
Save the object of sight, be the object of mind ;
So in vain have the planets their brilliancies thrown,
I can see by the light of one planet alone.

Then come to me, lady, believe me 't were wrong
To resist all the charms of love, moonlight and song :
'T is the moment when beauty to passion should
 fly,
'T is the moment, dear Mary, for love, you and I.

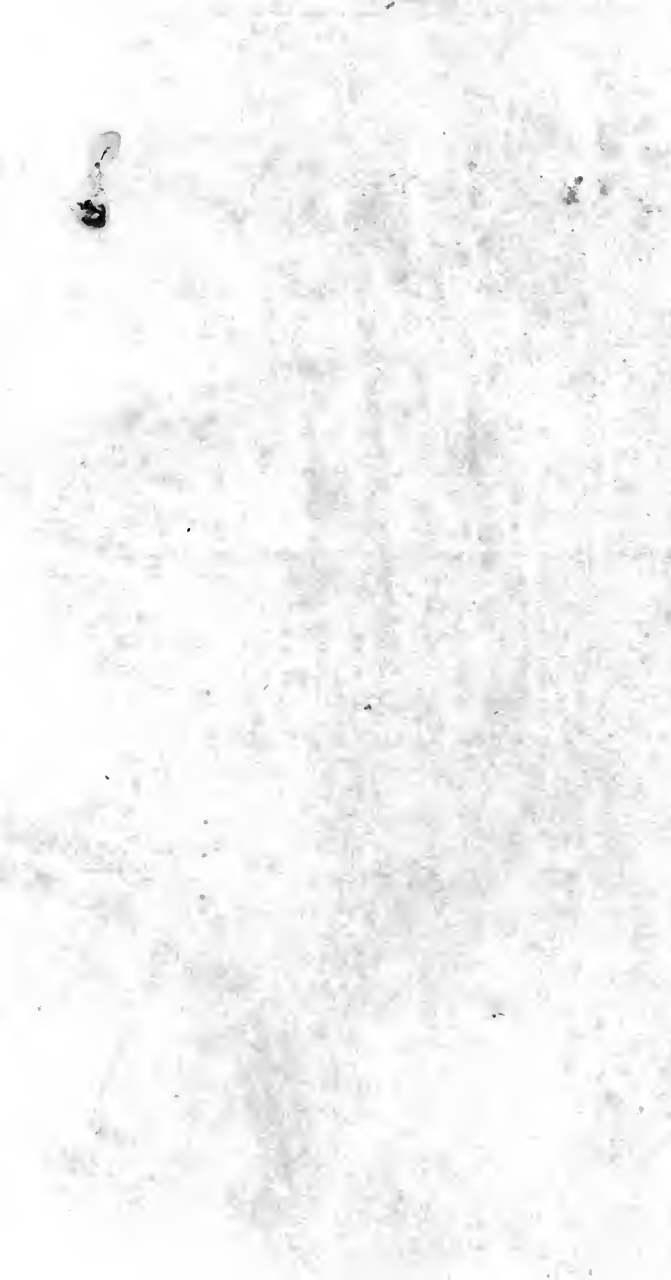
Should guardians look gloomy, or parents reprove,
O make no excuse, maid, but tell them you love,
If their natures be human, they 'll cease to condemn,
And if not, then you owe no allegiance to them.

ERRATA. — Page 143, line 18, for

“ In which the soul is *all* at rest ; ”

read —

“ In which the soul is *ill* at rest.”



1877

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